

# The Listener

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*Drawn by Edward Bishop, R.B.A.*

Summer Book Number



## IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

### STEADY CHANGE IN PATTERN OF OPERATIONS

#### SIR ALEXANDER FLECK ON LONG-TERM POLICY OF EXPANSION

The thirty-first annual general meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries Limited was held on May 15 in London. Sir Alexander Fleck, K.E.E., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S. (the Chairman) presided and, in the course of his speech, said:

Group sales to external customers have risen from £435 millions in 1956 to £463 millions in 1957. There is a steady change in the pattern of our operations, and a larger proportion of our turnover and profit comes from new products. Products which were not manufactured before the war accounted for a quarter of our home sales and a third of our export sales. We have reason to hope that this trend of increasing turnover and increasing profit from new products will continue. At the same time much expenditure has been incurred in extending, modernising and improving the plants which manufacture our more traditional products, and the drive for improved efficiency goes on all the time.

Commenting on the table in the Annual Report which showed for the past ten years the gross Ordinary dividend as a percentage of the capital and reserves belonging to the Ordinary Stockholders, Sir Alexander said: This percentage has varied from 3.4 to 5.8 per cent., the figure for 1957 being about 5 per cent. Your Directors do not regard this return as excessive; indeed in the long-term interests of the Company as a manufacturing organisation, as well as that of individual Stockholders, our efforts must be not merely to maintain this percentage but to increase it.

After referring to the approved scrip issue of one new Ordinary Share of £1 each for every £2 of Ordinary Stock held, Sir Alexander reviewed at length the altered basis of the Employees' Profit-Sharing Scheme necessitated by the alteration of the Company's capital structure, and said: I think you will agree that the new arrangement represents a better basis both from the stockholders' and from the employees' points of view.

We have come to the conclusion that the time has arrived for a fresh revaluation of our manufacturing assets, because there has been considerable further inflation since 1950. This revaluation has now been made as at January 1, 1958, and will be incorporated in the Accounts for 1958.

#### FUTURE PROSPECTS AND PLANS

For the first few months of this year we have had to face, in the home market, the results of the high Bank Rate and the credit squeeze. Our sales to some industries have been reduced as a result of the difficulties they have been facing, but in other cases demand has held up well, and for the first few months of 1958 home sales turnover has not been unsatisfactory.

So far as exports are concerned, conditions in the same period have become considerably more difficult, partly as the result of the tightening of import restrictions, but despite this, sales are running reasonably close to last year's.

It is more than usually difficult for me to give an indication of how the current year as a whole will turn out. A major uncertainty lies in the forecast of American conditions, which affect both our export and, to some extent, our home trade. That there is a serious recession in the United States cannot be doubted. Average unemployment in Britain is at present only 2 per cent., whereas it is as much as 7 per cent. in the United States. We are experiencing signs of weakening demand in some of our overseas markets and also in some sections of our home market.

Your directors remain confident in the long-term future of the business. If the demand for some of our products appears to weaken or fails to rise in accordance with our expectations, we shall not be deterred from carrying out our long-term policy of expansion. We shall continue to spend capital on the erection of new plants, or on the extension of existing plants, not with an eye on the demand in the next few months but rather with a faith in the long term trend of demand for our products. In this way, we believe that we shall serve not only the interests of our customers, our Stockholders and our employees, but also the interests of the country as a whole, as our capital expenditure will make a modest, but significant, contribution to the stability of demand for the products of other British industries. The report was adopted.

## Politics and Pensions



*Some people want a new pensions system run by the State. Others think we should be free to save and insure as we wish, with assurance companies or the State. Still others believe the State has no business to provide more than subsistence benefits. Where do we stand on these far-reaching issues?*

(6)

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Preservation of pension rights on a change of employment is gradually spreading. The cost is more than some firms can bear in relation to present output, so increased production is part of the answer to the growing desire for this advantage. As long ago as 1913 the United Kingdom Provident Institution became associated with the Federated Superannuation System for Universities which allows full transfer among its members. We have introduced preservation of pension benefits into our own staff scheme, and would like to see this feature included in all new pension schemes as a matter of course and where possible added to existing schemes.

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# The Listener

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## International Aspects of the French Crisis

By THOMAS BARMAN, B.B.C. diplomatic correspondent

THE news from France and North Africa this week\* is not entirely unexpected; the air has been heavy with catastrophe for some time past. I was in Paris about a month ago, at the time of the fall of the Government of M. Gaillard, and I found everything so oppressive that I was almost glad to get away.

I do not intend to say much about French internal problems: it is the international effect of those internal problems that I want to consider. Above all, there is the fact that France seems to be on the edge of the same sort of events as led to the breakdown of parliamentary government in Germany in the early 'thirties. The extreme nationalists on the right and the Communists on the left have precisely the same aims, to undermine the French democratic regime. They have had those aims for years: the difference now is that they seem to be almost on the point of achieving them, and in pursuing those aims the extreme nationalists are using the same slogans as the Communists and appealing to the same passions and the same prejudices—to patriotism, to nationalism, and above all to xenophobia. For in spite of France's splendid record as a home for the stranger and the homeless, there are times when a sort of anti-foreign passion seizes the French people. It is when they feel alone or in danger that it comes over them, and then the cry goes up, 'We have been betrayed'. It is what the extreme nationalists

are saying now; it is what the Communists have been saying for years; and it is all directed against what the French call the Anglo-Saxon Powers, and above all against the United States.

It is not only the Communists who would take the French out of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation if they ever came to power: there are men on the extreme right who would do the same. In that terrible debate that led to the fall of the Government on April 15, one of the ablest of the right-wing leaders, M. Soustelle, made a ferocious onslaught on the United States. 'We're allies when they need us in Europe', he said, 'yet when it comes to the Middle East or North Africa they ignore us. It is well known that the State Department is prepared to sacrifice everything, including its oldest and strongest friends, in the hope of acquiring the friendship, or at least the tolerance, of the Arabs'. Others, even more extreme, said that they would prefer France to abandon the North Atlantic Treaty rather than suffer any more humiliations at American hands.

To what extent these stark alternatives have taken hold of the general public, it is impossible to say. What is evident is that there is a deep and widespread conviction among ordinary men and women—at least in Paris—that the policy of the United States Government, and to some extent of the British Government, rests entirely on immediate self-interest,



and that what the Americans really want is to take over the French positions in North Africa. It is the oil in the Sahara that is supposed to be tempting them. French people point to the fact that their Governments have failed to get the support of their allies for their military efforts in North Africa, even though it is widely recognised that the security of Europe is at stake. They observe that the obligation to help is clearly and unambiguously stated in the North Atlantic Treaty itself: Article Six says that an armed attack upon Algeria shall be considered as an armed attack upon the Alliance as a whole.

It is easy to answer that the French are reading far more into the Treaty than was ever intended: the fact remains that they feel they have not had the support they think they are entitled to. On the contrary, they feel they have been betrayed. And all at once there come to life all the old symbols of Anglo-Saxon treason that are embalmed in the history books of France: Joan of Arc, Fashoda, Syria and Dakar, Suez—and now Algeria.

In this mood, irrational arguments, whether they come from the extreme right or the extreme left—or from anywhere else—are sure to hold a certain attraction. I am not concerned here to consider the consequences of the possible fall of the Fourth Republic. The immediate point is that any government resting on normal parliamentary foundations will have to take these dangerous sentiments into account; and it is

also evident that any false move from outside France could have a disastrous effect upon the whole Western security system.—‘*From Our Own Correspondent*’ (Home Service)

THOMAS CADETT, B.B.C. Paris correspondent, thus described the interview given by General de Gaulle on May 19:

‘The huge crimson and gold reception room of the Hotel Palais d’Orsay was packed to overflowing with 500 or 600 journalists when the General, portly but vigorous, entered with military precision at exactly three o’clock. He began with a prepared statement which he led off by saying that he had broken a three-year silence only because of the increasing gravity of events. What was happening in North Africa could lead to an extremely serious national crisis, or to the beginning of a resurrection. He could be useful once more to France, because the French had memories, and because it was a fact that the party regime did not solve the enormous problems facing the nation. He went on: “I can be useful, because I am a lone man, without organisation or party. I belong to nobody and to everybody”. Answering questions, he said that he understood and approved of the action of the army in taking over control of the settlers’ movement in Algeria. The army too, he said, had been profoundly moved by the Algerian drama, and had acted to prevent grave disorder. When asked if his statement, offering to take power, had not given fresh heart to the leaders of the rebellion, he replied, “I hope I have given them new courage”. And he went on to ask why he should stigmatise the Generals concerned as “rebellious”, when the Government itself had taken no action against them’.

## The Pattern of Wage Claims

By STEPHEN PARKINSON

PEOPLE who watch industrial events know that they have a way of assuming an annual pattern. Fourteen months ago, for instance, we were trying to keep wages down as a counter to inflation. The engineering and shipbuilding employers were withstanding strikes and strike threats in the belief that the Government would back them all the way. Then the railway unions refused to accept a three per cent. rise awarded them by the Railway Tribunal, and almost overnight the Transport Commission raised the amount to five per cent. to avoid a strike. Thereafter employers insisted that the Government, through the Transport Commission, had sold the pass and was responsible for wage rises subsequently granted.

Is this position the same today? Nobody can deny that the Government bowed to the threat of a strike by allowing the Transport Commission to give the railwaymen a three per cent. rise. To say that the money will come out of new economies is no answer to the charge that other workers seeking pay increases will expect no less than three per cent. Three million engineers and shipyard workers are in the queue again. So are the miners and a million building workers, and as the union conference season gets under way more demands will be forthcoming, which means that wages will rise, or the threat of strikes in other fields will occur.

But what was the alternative in the railway dispute? The gravest point in the issue arose eight days ago when the T.U.C. officially backed the London busmen in their strike. That powerful support could well have been extended to the railwaymen and the conflict between the Government and the unions would have been complete with the T.U.C. precluded by its stand from acting as a disinterested party to restore peace. I believe that at that point we had reached what was potentially the worst labour crisis since the war, and it may be argued that three per cent. was a small price to pay to

avoid a national transport strike with all it would mean to sterling and our economic prospects.

At the same time, people feel with some justification that each averted crisis only contains the seeds of a worse crisis. It may be said that in insisting on economies in return for the wage concession the Transport Commission established the principle of ability to pay. This would be more convincing if the wage increase had followed the economies rather than the economies following the increase. Wage demands may occur in industries whose ability to pay is not disputed. Are they now to be conceded without regard to their external inflationary effect? The railwaymen had a good case in that they are worse off than many other workers, but are other more fortunate workers less likely to demand an equivalent rise because of that?

There is no consistency and little justice in our wage rates from industry to industry, and at the moment we are only perpetuating the injustices—indeed, making them worse if a fixed percentage rise is allowed to establish a pattern each year. The blame for this situation rests just as much on employers as on unions, and I include the Government where it is an employer. Labour relations seem to consist of unions pressing wage claims and employers resisting them until, on the brink of disaster, the Government pulls some compromise out of a hat. This kind of Cold War will end only when employers and unions get together on the primary considerations of productivity and efficiency and fit wages into that context. Nor will industry-by-industry negotiation on these lines be sufficient. The operation requires a central co-ordination based on the changed priorities of modern industry. In other words there must be a complete breakaway from traditional practices, and I would not be so rash as to prophesy how many more labour crises we pass through before approaching it.

—‘*At Home and Abroad*’ (Home Service)



# The Lebanese Cauldron

By DOUGLAS STUART, B.B.C. Middle East correspondent

**T**HE riots and the killings in Lebanon have taken many people by surprise. How did they happen? There are many explanations offered: Mr. Dulles blames the Communists; President Eisenhower thinks that the anti-Americanism of the Lebanese rioters is part of a concerted plan of the Kremlin. The Lebanese Foreign Minister, Dr. Malik, blamed President Nasser's United Arab Republic, which he has accused of 'massive interference in the internal affairs of the country'. He told a news conference in Beirut: 'We interpret this as having everything to do with the events now unrolling in Lebanon'.

All these explanations contain truth—but not the whole truth. Communists, the Soviet Union, and President Nasser have all had a hand in stirring the Lebanese cauldron, but what must not be forgotten is that the Lebanese brought the cauldron to the boil themselves. They did this because, over the past few years, a number of Lebanese leaders have renounced the religious, cultural, racial, and political compromise on which the stability of the state rests.

Lebanon is an Arab State, but the mountains of Lebanon isolate the country from the rest of the Arab world. The main cities and towns of Lebanon are seaports: Beirut, Tyre, Sidon, and Tripoli. They face west, across the Mediterranean. Roughly speaking, half the people of Lebanon are Christians and half are Muslims—Arab and European, East and West, all are inextricably mixed in Lebanon. In fact, when you say 'Lebanon', you say 'the Levant'. And a Levantine—to quote a Lebanese author, Mr. Albert Hourami—is a man living in two worlds, who belongs to neither.

The broad issue, therefore, underlying the present disorder and bloodshed, is this: the Government of Lebanon wishes to preserve the compromise, the living in two worlds, while the Opposition wishes to commit Lebanon fully to the so-called 'Arab Liberation Movement', whose leader is President Nasser. This issue first became political dynamite at the time of the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt. Those who are now the leaders of the Lebanese Opposition were then in power. They resigned because President Chamoun refused to break off diplomatic relations with Britain and France. Their fury against the President increased when he accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Opposition claimed that Lebanon was no longer neutral; it was committed, they said, to the camp of the imperialists. They tried to overthrow the Government by legal means, that is to say at the poll: they were defeated. They claimed that the elections were rigged, but could not produce evidence to support their claim.

This took place a year ago. After that, the Opposition leaders plotted to overthrow the Government by an appeal to the mob. The Government says that their many journeys to Cairo and Damascus were to obtain Egyptian and Syrian help for

this endeavour. Recent events show these suspicions to have been well founded. What is, in effect, an insurrection in Lebanon is supported by volunteers from Egypt and Syria, and by money, arms, and ammunition supplied from Cairo and Damascus.

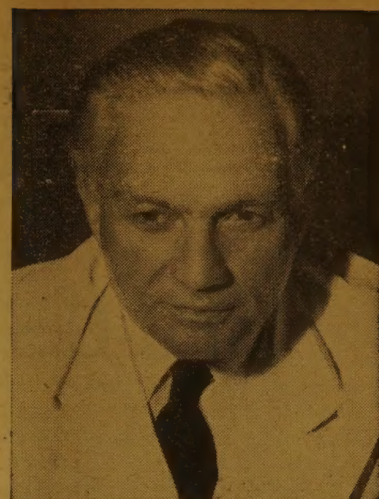
All this year, tension between the Government and the Opposition of Lebanon

centred on the question of a second term of office for President Chamoun. The Lebanese Constitution forbids two successive terms in the presidency. To stand again, therefore, President Chamoun would have to revise the constitution: this requires a two-thirds majority in the Lebanese Parliament. President Chamoun has not said that he wants to stand again; equally, he has not said that he will not, if the necessary legislation is passed. Without doubt, he commands a two-thirds majority in parliament. What is more, the Opposition have not produced an alternative candidate. All they have said is that Chamoun must not continue to be Lebanon's President.

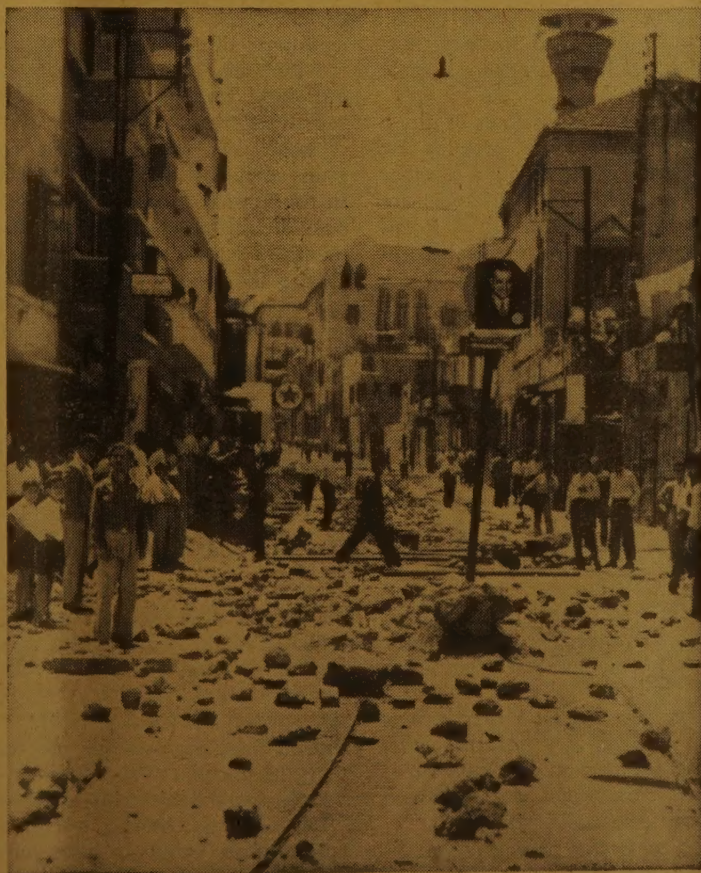
When, last week, the editor of an Opposition newspaper was murdered in Beirut the trouble began. Anti-Government supporters went on strike in Tripoli, the second largest city of Lebanon; there were riots and bloodshed. The disorders spread to the interior and eventually to Beirut. The Government controlled the big towns but not the countryside; the Opposition increased its demand. Their leaders said that President Chamoun

and his Government must resign. In reply, the Government said that it would not yield to what it termed 'those who plan and desire the destruction of the country'.

The question of the second term was removed to the background: the issue became the restoration of law and order. This already complicated situation is further complicated by two more factors, one internal, the other external. The internal factor is the possibility that the disorders in Lebanon will deteriorate into a battle between Christians and Muslims. Up till now, the Government of Lebanon has been carefully balanced on a religious and sectarian basis—for example, the President is a Maronite Christian; the Prime Minister, a Suli Muslim; the Foreign Minister, a Greek Orthodox Christian, and so on. The Opposition's close ties with Cairo and Damascus, however, tend to upset this balance. Opposition leaders have made no secret of their desire to associate Lebanon more closely with the predominantly Muslim United Arab Republic, headed



M. Camille Chamoun, President of the Republic of Lebanon



Anti-Government riots in Beirut last week



by President Nasser. There can be little doubt that the Christians of Lebanon would fight to prevent this taking place.

The external factor is the foreign support given to Government and Opposition alike in Lebanon. The Opposition draws its strength from President Nasser's Republic, behind which stands the Soviet Union. The Government has appealed to the United States for aid, and is to receive an air-lift of police equipment. The United States Ambassador in Beirut has stated: 'We are

determined to help the Lebanese Government maintain internal security'. Strategically, economically, and emotionally, the *status quo* in Lebanon is vital to the West. This is because Lebanon is the transit junction to Iraq and Jordan, because a large proportion of Iraq's oil is exported through Lebanon, and because a big Christian community lives in Lebanon. What happens in Lebanon, therefore, may affect the whole world.

—From 'Our Own Correspondent' (Home Service)

## Anti-U.S. Feeling in Latin America

By DAVID BLELLOCH

IT is not difficult to identify the immediate causes of the disagreeable incidents which have marked Vice-President Nixon's 'goodwill' tour of South American capitals. I begin by ruling out, as unworthy of serious consideration, the suggestion that Mr. Nixon has been the victim of an underground Communist conspiracy. Throughout Latin America there is always much latent ill-will towards a much richer and more powerful neighbour. This is from time to time brought to the surface and exacerbated, as in the present case, by both economic and political factors.

The economies of the Latin American countries tend to depend on the export of one single commodity, or of a very few commodities, such as meat, wool, fruit, coffee, oil, metals. The United States is a main market for such exports, and in the United States commodity prices have been falling whilst there has been a growing tendency to limit imports by high tariffs and other restrictive measures. North American companies have been largely responsible for organising and financing the production of the raw materials which Latin America exports, and experience the world over shows that foreign companies responsible for purely extractive industries are never popular. It is true that the United States has been granting financial aid to Latin America on a scale which certainly seems generous to the North American taxpayer, but, on the one hand, the Latin American tends to feel humiliated by this aid, whilst on the other hand he feels that the United States is granting aid on a much more generous scale to countries in other parts of the world.

Politically, Latin Americans bear in mind various cases of direct intervention by the United States in their internal affairs, and also blame North American influences for bolstering up a number of unpopular dictatorships. Many Venezuelans, for instance, are convinced that both the recently overthrown dictatorship of President Pérez Jiménez and the far longer and more terrible one of President Juan Vicente Gómez, which came to an end in 1935, owed much to the support of the United States Government and of North American oil interests. Add to all this the remarkably

poor quality of some United States diplomatic representatives; resentment, on the part of populations of very mixed racial origin, of colour discriminations in the United States; and the fact that the informal back-slapping affability which is so much a part of the North American way of life and which is so characteristic of Mr. Nixon personally is liable to be mistaken by Latins (whose notions of politeness are very different) for condescension or even for deliberate rudeness.

These incidents point a moral to us in this country, and we should be the last to regard them with complacency. My own experience in a number of so-called 'underdeveloped' countries in various parts of the world, and particularly in Latin America, has convinced me that all of us in the more developed countries still have a great deal to learn as regards our attitudes and behaviour towards the underdeveloped nations and peoples. Owing to the accidents of history, what we call 'development' has proceeded very unevenly over the surface of the globe. Nevertheless, it is a world-wide process, and Latin America, for instance, is caught up in it as inexorably as we are ourselves. It is only natural that Latin Americans should regard nations whose progress towards development has gone further than their own with a certain jealousy, a certain suspicion. They are quick to resent anything that they can interpret as a desire to retard their development, to relegate them permanently to the status of mere producers of raw materials for our industries.

Moreover, we should always bear in mind that the way towards our own development has been prepared by a whole series of rebellions, revolutions, and civil wars. We must not be surprised or worried if the process of development involves similar growing pains elsewhere. There are plenty of wise and level-headed people in the United States who will realise that the crowds which have been behaving so unpleasantly to Mr. and Mrs. Nixon fundamentally represent social forces which in the long run are on our side in the world's gradual and uneven but nevertheless accelerating progress towards the abolition of poverty and oppression.

—'At Home and Abroad' (Home Service)

## Preventive Medicine and the New Plagues

By E. MAURICE BACKETT

IN these times of rapid progress in medical science, hardly a day passes without some striking advance hitting the headlines. Either it is a drug or the surgeons have perfected some new and spectacular technique of dealing with advanced disease. There is no doubt about it, the traditional killers, things like tuberculosis and pneumonia, are on the way out, and their disappearance is confirmed—if, indeed, we needed confirmation—by the rapidly declining mortality from these old-fashioned diseases. These are the triumphs of curative medicine.

In contrast, the really spectacular successes of preventive medicine are now ages old: we have become used to the fact that cholera, typhoid, and smallpox are all 'in the bag' (though, if

we do not keep on vaccinating, smallpox, for one, could easily return). There is still quite a bit to do, perhaps, in the way of tidying up polio, having more people immunised, particularly against tetanus, whooping cough, and diphtheria, and in stopping the spread of food poisoning and dysentery: but, important though these diseases are, they are still very small stuff compared with the plagues of a century or so ago.

So it seems reasonable to ask what preventive medicine is doing. What do the research workers do with themselves these days, now that the odds on dying have changed so much and you and I are more likely to fall out of an aeroplane or under a car than die of the black death or the scrofula? What are the plagues of



today, and can we tackle them in the same way as we did in the heyday of preventive medicine?

One of the good things about the desperate diseases of the past (only good from a preventive medicine point of view, of course), was that, in a sense, they were simpler than the diseases of today. Anyway, they seem so when we look back. In one London epidemic, for example, the organism that causes cholera was suspected of being carried in the drinking water. Local people took this drinking water from a well fitted with one of those old-fashioned pumps. Here, if you like, was the cause of the epidemic. To prevent further spread, two things were necessary: remove the pump handle so that no more water would be taken from the polluted well, and then clean up the source of pollution: in this particular case, a leaking sewer.

Research workers in preventive medicine today think rather nostalgically of the apparent simplicity of that story. How pleasant it would be if we could prevent peptic ulcer, for example, by just turning off a tap. Current threats to our health seem less simple; they have literally dozens of causes, all interacting, all contributing a little to the final chance that an individual will get the condition.

### Common Ways of Dying

I like to put these new plagues, these 'epidemics', if you like, of the twentieth century, into three groups: first, the diseases that are actually on the increase: coronary disease of the heart and cancer of the lung are the most challenging in this group, peptic ulcer is another. These are fast becoming the most common ways of dying or being ill, and all of them are increasing rapidly, even when you have corrected your figures for improved diagnosis, the special interests of doctors, and all the other snags of jumping to this conclusion.

My second group is not actually increasing, but proportionately it is taking a much greater toll than ever before. The diseases in this group are being left high and dry, as it were, by the receding tide of the infections. Let me give you an example: when a great many people died of T.B., scarlet fever, and diphtheria, a few deaths from an obscure cancer was relatively—only relatively, mind—an unimportant threat. Nowadays, since hardly anyone dies of these infections, the few deaths from an obscure cancer become relatively very much more important. Accidental death, the great group of chest diseases which we call bronchitis, and most of the cancers, fall into this category. Finally, there are the new threats which claim our attention because more and more people are becoming involved: the diseases of old age, for instance, or the new and almost unknown diseases associated with radiation.

The first step in the investigation of all these diseases is the same: to get an accurate picture of the threat; that is, to have a look at the size of the problem. For example, is the amazing increase in the number of people dying from heart disease a real one, or is it perhaps just the result of a new fashion in diagnosis? If we are satisfied that the picture is a real one, the next step is to try to find out who is specially vulnerable. What sort of people get this disease? Are they young or old, married or single, rich or poor? Does it occur more commonly among town dwellers or among country folk? And so on. This can become a most exciting hunt, and there is always the chance that you might be lucky and see a pattern in the way the disease is distributed which will give a clue to the nature of the disease itself.

### Coronary Disease

Coronary disease of the heart has reached really epidemic proportions among men like me: the middle-aged males in this and most other countries that share our way of life. The odd thing about this disease, apart from its frightening increase (which is a real one, by the way) is that its distribution in the population is quite topsy-turvy. Most of the classical causes of death hit hardest the poorer groups in our community. Thus T.B. death rates have always been higher among unskilled labourers and their families than among the professions. Infant deaths are still much more common among the poorer sections of society than among the well-off. But for some time now the reverse has been the case with coronary disease. From this disease, death rates are highest among the professional, and lowest among the unskilled, workers. By and

large, it is a disease of the more prosperous. Perhaps the rates are higher than anywhere else among doctors themselves: though I suspect that this may be due, in part at least, to good diagnosis. (Doctors are, if anything, over-careful at diagnosing their own diseases.) Why should there be these enormous differences in the occurrence of the disease; differences which, for once, favour the poorer sections of our community? What other differences are there between professional and unskilled men that could be a clue to some of the causes? Obviously there are still dozens of differences: for a start, the professional man more often than not lives a sedentary sort of life, drives a car, and probably still enjoys a much higher standard of living than the unskilled workman. Could this higher standard of living, that we talk about so glibly, help to cause the disease? For some of us there is no doubt that a higher standard means eating too much rich food, taking too little physical exercise, smoking too much, becoming over-weight; or perhaps a combination of all of these things and a few others as well. This may be one of the bits of the jigsaw puzzle. But the notion has to be tested.

For example, in a recent study two apparently similar groups of people differed markedly in the amount and kind of fat which they ate. When it was discovered that the heavy fat eaters suffered much more heart disease, some people were inclined to jump to the conclusion that here was a significant cause. But close scrutiny showed several other important differences between the groups. One of these was an intangible and very difficult to define difference of psychological make-up. It certainly seemed, in this case at least, that the prosperous, high fat eaters were also under more psychological stress than the others. It was not clear where this extra stress came from, but it may have been something to do with the tensions and frustrations of urban life; different sets of values, responsibilities for people rather than for things, and the striving and pushing for top places that characterises some professional and big business lives.

### Modern Comforts and Modern Illnesses

But does this always characterise the lives of sufferers from coronary disease? Is there a link between them? We do not know, and I personally rather doubt it. We do not know because as yet we cannot measure things like frustration and striving. However, we can measure (though with some difficulty) exercise, fat intake, smoking, and so on, and the results so far suggest that real—by which I mean rock-hard—relationships do exist between these factors and the disease. I wonder what else it is about our way of life, or at least the way of life we all seem to aim at, with its comforts, its television, its huge and varied diets, and its motor-cars, which predisposes us to heart disease—and perhaps to other diseases as well. Anyway, you will see that my first example of a twentieth-century plague is going to be a pretty hard nut to crack.

Another example of a new plague threatening us now in much the same way as cholera and typhoid used to in the past is injury and death from accidents: accidents of all kinds, that is. This threat is an example from my second group. Accident death rates are not actually rising, except among the young men and the elderly; but they are not going down anything like quickly enough, and thus are becoming proportionately more and more important. Death and injury by motor vehicles particularly is now very nearly public health problem number one. The snag is that it does not lend itself easily to investigation. To begin with, the whole subject is fraught with emotion; people get terribly upset if you start asking them if they drive after having a drink or two (nearly as touchy as when you talk to them about smoking and lung cancer). That is half the trouble about the new plagues: in the old days the authorities could remove the pump handle and all would be well. In these days it is a matter for the individual: I have to change my habits of eating or drinking or driving or smoking, and that is much more difficult to do than to get someone else to lay on a clean water supply.

Road accidents to children are particularly interesting to preventive medicine. This is not only because of their huge numbers, but because, if we knew more about the subject, we might find out why some children quickly learn how to take everyday

(continued on page 855)



# The Listener

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## Welcome to Britain

THE time of year is approaching when, as Mr. Alistair Cooke reminds us in a talk published elsewhere in this number, many American visitors begin coming to Europe. In view of the present troubles in France—which all who value civilisation must pray will soon be ended—some of them will no doubt prolong their stay upon our shores. Indeed, quite apart from the many attractions of Britain, American visitors have an impulse to linger in a country where they enjoy what is for them a favourable rate of exchange. Some Americans will say frankly that they postpone theatre-going until they come to London. For on New York Broadway not only do theatre tickets cost roughly twice as much as they do in Shaftesbury Avenue at the present rate of exchange but since a show in New York has to be either a *succès fou* or an immediate flop it is not easy to obtain tickets at all. Meals and hotels are also relatively cheap for our American visitors, although this is no excuse for their being mulcted, as sometimes happens to the innocent in Europe, for not all Americans are wealthy, and their trip across the Atlantic often represents the expenditure of savings put aside for an enthusiastically anticipated occasion.

But however much they have to spend, American visitors need to recognise that they will not necessarily find home comforts (or discomforts, according to the angle from which these are viewed). They like their drinks iced and their bread hot; though tea is regaining favour, as the memories of the Boston Tea Party fade into the distant past, most of them expect coffee with every meal and in between meals, and good coffee at that, not the brew that masquerades as such in too many of our wayside hotels. They may hope for private bathrooms or at least showers attached to their bedrooms, they do not cotton on to the idea of walking any long distances, they are used to 'express roads' over which traffic moves at high speeds, but if they cannot find all these, they at least should be able to find the salads and hamburgers which now appear to be their staple diet.

Nevertheless, most of the Americans who come over here will undoubtedly be tolerant of a way of life which is not only in detail but in general very different from their own. For we have neither the gregariousness nor the restlessness of the average United States citizen: nor is the 'organisation man', as William Whyte calls the typical American business man of the present generation, so common over here. But many Americans are now Anglophiles with a genuine appreciation of the historical and cultural affinities that link our two nations—theirs upon a vast continent still fairly sparsely populated, ours struggling to maintain a high standard of living in a tightly packed island. There is, indeed, every reason for friendship, if we can but understand each other's differences. On both sides of the Atlantic a warm welcome, a little generosity, and a true effort at sociability will always be appreciated.

Mr. Maurice Ashley, who has been deputy editor of THE LISTENER since 1946, has been appointed to succeed Mr. Alan Thomas, the present editor, on his retirement from the B.B.C. next August.

## What They Are Saying

The crisis in France

IN A BROADCAST to the French people on May 17, the Prime Minister, M. Pflimlin, said his Government would do all it could to prevent a break between France and Algeria, appealed for national unity, and said there would be a thorough reform of French institutions, but carried out legally and with respect for public liberties. He said people in Algeria had been deliberately misled by those who wanted to transform demonstrations into an insurrection. Those responsible had accomplices in France.

A *communiqué* issued after a long cabinet meeting in Paris on May 17 stated:

The Government orders all civil and military authorities to obey only the Government of the Republic.

The *communiqué* was issued a few hours after M. Soustelle had arrived in Algeria—after evading a police guard round his home in Paris—and told wildly cheering crowds, many of them Muslims, that he was placing himself at the service of French Algeria. In his address, broadcast by Algiers radio, he paid tribute to the C.-in-C. of the French forces in Algeria, General Salan, to the head of the Algiers Committee of Public Safety, General Massu, and 'to our magnificent army in Algeria'. On May 18, M. Soustelle announced that the Committee of Public Safety for the whole of Algeria would be formed that day. He urged that General de Gaulle be appointed a national arbiter to ensure that Algeria should remain French. On May 18 Algiers radio called on all Algerians, including Muslims, to attend mass rallies to show their devotion to 'freedom and unity'. The broadcast ended: 'Long live Soustelle! Long live de Gaulle!' General Salan issued an appeal to the Algerian nationalist rebels promising them a free pardon if they would lay down their arms and take their place in a 'new French Algeria'.

Meanwhile, from Paris it was announced that the Prefect for Algiers had been dismissed, that the resignation of the Chief of the General Staff, General Ely, had been accepted, and that General de Gaulle would make a further declaration on May 19.

On May 16, Algiers radio broadcast a speech by Léon Delbecq, a member of the 'Committee of Public Safety', who said: 'We appeal to de Gaulle, the man standing above parties, to save France'.

In the early hours of May 17, a large majority in the French parliament approved the granting of emergency powers for three months to the new French Government. M. Pflimlin announced that these powers were not aimed at General de Gaulle who, he believed, did not intend any attack against Republican institutions. In the appeal broadcast by Algiers radio from the Committee of Public Safety to President Coty, calling on him to set up a Government of National Safety under General de Gaulle, it was stated that the movement in Algeria was not seditious and wanted to be led from Paris by a strong Republican Government.

After General de Gaulle, on May 15, announced: 'I hold myself ready to take over the powers of the Republic', the Socialist *Le Populaire* was quoted for a banner headline saying: 'The Republic is threatened! The assault against the regime has begun!' But the left-wing *Combat*, which described the General's statement as 'a civic act' expressed the view that nothing but the danger to the country could have persuaded him to break his long silence. The independent *Le Monde* was quoted as saying that should parliament show itself incapable once more, perhaps General de Gaulle could give a truly national complexion to a 'Government of Public Safety'. The conservative *Le Figaro* urged the re-establishment of constitutional authority, without which everything would be lost for France and everything won for Communism.

From the U.S.A., *The Washington Post* was quoted as saying:

So far the effect of General de Gaulle's statement has been to encourage the extremists in Algeria. . . . At the other end of the political spectrum there is the threat posed by the Communists, whose patriotism is to Moscow.

*The New York Herald Tribune* was quoted as saying that France's tragedy was that no government had hitherto been strong enough either to end the Algerian war or to fight it to victory.



# Did You Hear That?

## THE COW AS A BALLERINA

HORSES HAVE AN OLD and honourable place on the stage, at least in pantomime. Now in east Germany it seems that cows are to be given a chance, too, in a ballet which has been arranged by the Village State Ensemble at farmers' meetings. IVOR JONES, B.B.C. Berlin correspondent, spoke about this in 'Radio Newsreel'.

'The ballet', he said, 'is called "The Solitary Cow", and it is described as a contribution to socialist reconstruction. Accounts of it are, so far, by no means complete. For instance, they do not say whether the part of the cow is danced by one ballerina or two. But there is little doubt that the work exists. It was mentioned in an east German local newspaper and now the Free Jurists Organisation in west Berlin—which has many contacts in the east—has published its plot, quoting from the official programme. According to this, the ballet opens on a collective farm, and there the workers are telling their leader (who has the title of Brigadier) about the amount of work they have done. They are happy and joyful about the harvest of their co-operative work, it says, and express their happiness by dancing. Ballet programmes seem to be as stilted in one country as another.

'However, nearby live a peasant couple who have not been collectivised and who own the heroine, the solitary cow. They work hard from early morning until sunset. But, the programme says, the cow has already realised the necessity and advantages of co-operative work in the country. Every day it gets more stubborn towards its masters, it wants company, and at last it jumps into the collective farm. The couple cannot resist any more. They follow it and are warmly accepted, etc.

'Played with plenty of slapstick, all this may be funny enough, although it may call for some unusual character-acting from the ballerina—or ballerinas—who plays the cow. But even if the ballet is a flop, the Communist authorities have other ways of influencing the peasants to give up their holdings and join collectives. It has recently been reported here that farmers are now to be persuaded—not individually, but at village meetings where more pressure can be brought to bear. And the acreage of the collectives is to be almost doubled in the next two years or so'.

## RESTORING STONE CARVINGS AT OXFORD

E. S. FRITH talked in 'Today' about his work as a stone-carver on Oxford's historic buildings. 'The stones are prepared in the first place by the mason, who cuts the blocks, works the necessary masonry details, and sends them on to me', he said. 'These reach me therefore in the form of blocks of stone of the correct size and I have to determine what they should be carved into. This is not always easy as, more often than not, the decayed condi-

tion of the old stone has obliterated most of the details. However, by picking up a clue here and there, by a study of the building, and a certain knowledge of the period, one should be able to arrive at a result which although not identical in detail is in the spirit of the original.

'In some cases we do not re-carve, we restore. A case in point is the figure that I did at Oriel College. As you can see from the photograph, it was in a parlous state. The College feared it would

have to be destroyed, but I persuaded them to let me work on it. Where large portions were missing or in a dangerous state, we removed the old stone and built in a piece of new which I subsequently carved. I found also that what appeared to be a leg was in fact part of another figure, and fortunately I found a piece of stone which corroborated this, and from that I reconstructed the whole figure which eventually became a Virgin and Child.

'The tools used by the ancient Egyptians were very similar to ours. Certainly pneumatic hammers have been invented since those days and I have tried to use them, but I must say

I prefer the old hammer and chisel. You get into the way of working with the hammer and chisel, one in conjunction with the other, until they seem to become an extension of yourself, and it is certainly a much more subtle tool. Carving is complicated, a matter of relating curved surfaces—concave and convex—and a great sensitivity is required to do this. So I shall stick to my hammer and chisel'.

## HUTTERITES IN CANADA

'In the towns of western Canada', said HOWARD WHEELER in a talk in the Home Service, 'you will sometimes see a couple who look as if they have arrived that morning from the Black Forest—the man bearded and wearing a black, wide-brimmed hat, the woman in a long, peasant skirt with a handkerchief round her head. People will tell you that they are Hutterites, members of a German religious sect who farm on a communal basis.

'I went to see one of their farm colonies in the middle of a snow-covered, treeless plateau among the hills of south-west Saskatchewan, a good twenty miles from the nearest town. My first impression was the tidiness of it all—trim white houses, farm buildings painted a bright yellow. In one of the houses, I met the Kleinsasser family: the father a handsome man in his forties with a black beard; his wife, plump, kindly and cheerful; and several of their ten children, mostly girls ranging from their late teens to a three-year-old.

'Mr. Kleinsasser produced a jug of rhubarb wine and told me how their grandfathers had left Europe eighty years ago, to seek religious freedom in the United States and Canada. He said the basic principles of the Hutterites are community of goods and



Stone figure of the Virgin and Child at Oriel College, Oxford, before and after restoration by Mr. E. S. Frith





non-resistance; they refuse to fight, to hold public office, or to vote. In this particular colony, twenty families—about 100 men, women and children in all—farm some 11,000 acres. Mr. Kleinsasser thought that if the colony got any larger they would have to buy more land elsewhere and set up a new one.

'I found that the farm is indeed run on a communal basis: the men elect their own pastor (who is both their spiritual and temporal head), a farm manager, and a committee of elders. Everything is bought in bulk, including food and material for making clothes. The Hutterites have a name among their Canadian neighbours for the efficiency with which they run their farms, and particularly the amount of machinery they use. Each family is given living quarters and a small amount of pocket money; they all eat in the common dining hall—a spotless place with long tables, one for the men and boys and one for the women and girls.

'Mr. Kleinsasser spoke in German to one of his daughters, and she set off to show us round the farm. She was a lively girl of about eighteen, with a liking for such Canadian phrases as "That's for sure" when she wanted to agree with something you had said. I asked her how marriages were arranged in the colony, and she said that they married for love, like everyone else; that she had been in love herself once, but fell out of it. Another thing I asked was how they spent their evenings, and she said that she and her mother and sisters would sew or read. They are not allowed to have magazines or a radio. And it is early to bed—at eight o'clock—and early to rise.

'The man who took me to see this colony told me that the Hutterites are remarkably happy, cheerful, well-balanced people. Theirs is a virtually classless society in which all dress and work alike. Everyone (including the children) has a job to do about the farm, and knows that when he becomes sick or old he and his family will be looked after. Crime, divorce, suicide, and insanity are almost unknown. It is even said (and you may find this hardest of all to believe) that there are no family quarrels'.

## ROWING THE BOUNDS

'The Tyne, is nowadays ruled by the Tyne Commissioners', said LYNN ROBSON in 'The Northcountryman', but before then the Corporation of Newcastle long governed the river and on Ascension Day in each year the mayor and burgesses set out to survey the boundaries of their jurisdiction, and a rare occasion everybody made of it.

'Early in the morning great crowds collected along the banks, countless decorated boats gathered at the quayside, close to the old Mansion House. They were manned by oarsmen in clean white shirts and trousers, most of them with a musician aboard, flags were hoisted, cannon were loaded. There was cheering, singing, and playing. At six o'clock the guns of the castle boomed, the cathedral bells pealed out, and dozens of oars struck the water. As the mayor's barge at the head of the procession arrived opposite the Sandgate the band struck up "Weel may the keel row", and scores of market lassies and kelp carriers yelled and squalled. At Hawks' iron works Great Neddy, the huge cannon, saluted the travellers. On past the foundries and coal staiths and ship-yards they went, to North Shields at last.

'While the other barges and boats waited at Tynemouth the

barge bearing the River Jury rowed out as far as Sparrow Hawk at sea. The duty of this jury of citizens was to help the corporation in maintaining its rule, and it was sworn to this resounding oath: "You swear that you shall as often as there shall be just cause, true presentment make of all nuisances done in this port of Newcastle upon Tyne . . . and you shall do this at the Admiralty, before the mayor, recorder, and aldermen of the said town for the time being, and that without all respect of love and hatred to the persons so offending".

'Then back turned the procession of boats up the river to the Mansion House, where the mayor's party took refreshment, and on westward to Newburn Haughs where dancing began amid showers of oranges and gingerbread, while the jury walked on to Hedwin Streams, two miles above Newburn. Here the harbour-master clambered up on the boundary stone, with a glass of wine in his hand, and toasted the King and the conservators of the river

Tyne. On the way back, at the island called the King's Meadows, the whole party again disembarked and the final festivities began and were kept up till dark'.



Fisherman making wire lobster nets on Das Island in the Persian Gulf. 'Adma Enterprise' can be seen in the harbour, where it was fitted out before being towed to its present position twenty miles from the island

British Petroleum Company

## THE NEW DAS

Das Island, in the Persian Gulf, is only a mile long and a mile wide, not much more than a patch of sand—a desolate place without a single tree. Until a couple of years ago, Das Island was inhabited only by birds and scorpions. A recent visitor, GRAHAM BIRKETT, a New Zealander on the staff of the British Petroleum Company, told listeners to 'The Eye-witness' what a different picture the place presents now.

'Today there is a thriving community of about forty Europeans, 150 Arabs, and a few Indians and Pakistanis', he said, 'and they enjoy practically every modern convenience.

'In 1953 the ruler of Abu Dhabi, a small sheikdom on the Arabian Peninsula, granted our company a concession to explore for oil over some 1,200 miles of the sea-bed in the Persian Gulf. After surveys had been made, a drilling site was selected and a headquarters and supply base for the drilling platform had to be found. Das Island was chosen, and in May 1956 an advance construction party landed on it, sailing in Arab dhows. About a hundred Europeans and several hundred Arab workers worked in the heat of the Persian Gulf for a year—building houses, store sheds, maintenance shops, a small hospital, an air strip, and a harbour. They led an almost Robinson Crusoe existence, for everything, including fresh water, had to be brought in by ship.

'Meantime, far away in Germany, a 4,000-ton mobile drilling platform was being built, and when it was completed last year it was towed 6,800 miles from Kiel through the Suez Canal to the Persian Gulf. The platform was then towed twenty miles from Das and its legs lowered on to the sea bed. You must visualise a vast steel platform, nearly as big as a football field, which stands forty feet above the water on four enormous legs. This man-made island is called Adma Enterprise—Adma being the initials of Abu Dhabi Marine Areas Limited.

'About forty Europeans work round the clock on twelve-hour shifts on the 140-foot-high drilling rig on Adma Enterprise. Off duty on Adma they enjoy air-conditioned quarters and the best of frozen food brought by helicopter and boat from Das. After six days' work on Adma they return to Das Island by helicopter or boat, to enjoy three days rest. They can fish, swim, play football or tennis, and soon they will be able to play nine holes of golf'.



# The Tribune's Visitation

An excerpt from a longer work by DAVID JONES

Sir!  
No sir, yes sir, Middle Watch Relief, sir.  
Just come off, sir.

Yes sir.

Well, no sir, half an hour back, sir.

No sir, some from last levy  
some, redrafted.

No sir, from all parts, sir.

In particular?

I see, and you, sergeant?

The Urbs, sir, Regio 4, sir.

Fifteen years, sir, come next October Games.  
October Games!

and whose games, pray, are these?

Some Judy-show

to make the flowers grow

the April mocked man

crowned and cloaked

I suppose

going rustic are they  
under y'r very nose

and you good Cockney bred

born well in sound of the geese-cry

and with the Corona up, I see

and of the First Grade.

Where won? or was it an issue, sergeant?

On the German *limes*, sir.

And y'r bar?

On the German *limes*, sir, North Sector.

And the two torques?

On the same *limes*, sir, South Sub-Sector,  
sir, in front of Fosse 60, sir, the other...

Enough! I'm not asking for back-filed  
awards or press *communiqués*—no doubt  
the *Acta* gave you half a column on how  
plebeian blood's no bar to bravery—I know  
it all and backwards. But we'll speak  
presently, you and I.

For now, where's this mixed bunch  
of yours?

I have a word to say.

Yes sir, very good sir, Guard! Guard!  
for inspection...

Cease man, cease!

A liturgy too late  
is best not sung.

Stand them at ease  
stand them easy

let each of you stand each as you are

let these sleep on and take their rest

if any man can sleep

to equinoxial runes

and full-moon incantations.

You, corporal, stand yourself easy.

You, whose face I seem to know

a good Samnite face.

Private what? Pontius what?

A rare name too, for trouble.

And you with the Etruscan look

not Pte Maecenas by any chance?

No sir, Pte 330099 Elbius, sir.

But with a taste for the boards, eh? We  
must remember that at the reg'mental binge.  
That lorica back to front and y'r bared  
flanks become you well—extremely funny

and very like your noble ancestors, unless  
the terracotta lies.

But all of you stand

I have a word to say.

First a routine word

a gloss on the book

and no more, a sergeant's word—sergeant.

Men, when you are dismissed to quarters,  
it is to quarter-duties, not to Saturnalia. The  
regulation rest's allowed, now get on to  
those kits, on to those brasses. D'you think  
that steel's brought from Toletum at some  
expense for you to let to rust—and those  
back-rivets and under those frogs...

but must I do a corporal's nagging must  
I be scold, like a second cook to pallid sluts  
beneath her, must I read out a rooky's list  
of do's and don'ts and speak of overlaps and  
where to buy metal-polish. Are there no  
lance-jacks to demonstrate standing orders?

Does the legate need to do  
what he delegates?

Must those with curial charge

be ever prying on a swarm of vicars

or nothing goes forward?

Must tribunes bring gun-fire to centurions  
or else there's no parade?

But enough: analogies are wearisome and  
I could analogise to the end of time, my  
Transpadane grandma's friend taught me  
the tricks. I'd beat the rhetoric of Carnutic  
conjurers and out-poet ovates from druid  
bangors farside the Gaulish Strait. But I'll  
be 'forthright Roman' as the saying goes,  
but seldom goes beyond the saying. Let's fit  
our usage to the tag—for once.

The loricas of Caesar's men  
should shine like Caesar  
back and front

whose thorax shines all ways

and to all quarters

to the world-ends

whether he face unstable Britain

or the weighty Persians.

So that all of them say:

Rome's back is never turned.

But a word more: this chitty's fire is built  
for section's rations, not for warming back-  
sides. Is Jerusalem on Caucasus? Are your  
Roman loins so starved that Caledonian  
trews were best indented for? Should all the  
aunts on Palatine knit you Canusian com-  
forts, or shall we skin the bear of Lebanon  
and mount the guard in muffs?

Come! leave that chatter and that witch-  
wife song, that charcoal can well tend itself;  
now do you attend your several duties.

Guard, guard—at ease! Guard!...

No, sergeant, no, not so anxious

I have a word to say

I have a more necessary word.

I would bring you to attention  
not liturgically  
but in actuality.

The legate has spoken of a misplaced objec-  
tivity. I trust a serving officer may know  
both how to be objective and to judge the  
time and place. For me the time is now and  
here the place.

You sergeant, you junior N.C.O.s  
my order was stand easy  
men less at ease I've seldom seen.

It belongs to the virtue of rank to command.  
If I, by virtue of my rank, deem it necessary  
to command composure, then compose your-  
selves. I have a word to say for which a  
measure of composure may, in you, be  
requisite.

I have a word to say to you as  
men and as a man speaking to men, but,  
and a necessary but, as a special sort of  
man speaking to a special sort of men at a  
specific but recurring moment in *urbs*-time.

Is this a hut on Apennine, where valley-  
gossips munch the chestnuts and croak  
Saturnian spells? Is this how guard-details  
stand by for duties who guard the world-  
utilities?

Old rhyme, no doubt, makes beautiful  
the older fantasies  
but leave the stuff  
to the men in skirts  
who beat the bounds  
of small localities  
all that's done with  
for the likes of us  
in *urbs* throughout *orbis*.

It's not the brotherhood of the fields or the  
Lares of a remembered hearth, or the con-  
secrated wands bending in the fertile light  
to transubstantiate for child-man the  
material vents and flows of nature into the  
breasts and milk of the goddess.

Suchlike bumpkin sacraments  
are for the young-time  
for the dream-watches  
now we serve contemporary fact.  
It's the world-bounds  
we're detailed to beat  
to discipline the world-floor  
to a common level  
till everything presuming difference  
and all the sweet remembered demarcations  
wither  
to the touch of us  
and know the fact of empire.  
Song? antique song  
from known-site  
spells remembered from the breast?  
No!

But Latin song, you'll say, good song the  
fathers sang, the aboriginal and variant  
alliterations known to each small *pagus*.



The remembered things of origin and streamhead, the things of the beginnings, of our own small beginnings.

The loved parts of that whole  
which, when whole  
subdued to wholeness.  
all the world.

These several streams, these local growths all that belongs to the fields of Latium to the Italic fatherland, surely these things, these dear pieties, should be remembered.

It stands to reason, you'll say, these things deep things, integral to ourselves, make for efficiency, steady the reg'mental will, make the better men, the better soldiers, so the better friends of Caesar.

No, not so  
that pretty notion, too, must go.

Only the neurotic  
look to their beginnings.

We are men of now and must strip as the facts of now would have it. Step from the caul of fantasy even if it be the fantasy of sweet Italy.

Spurn the things of Saturn's Tellus?  
Yes, if memory of them  
(some pruned and bearing tree  
our sister's song)  
calls up some embodiment  
of early loyalty  
raises some signum  
which, by a subconscious trick  
softens the edge of our world intention.

Now listen: Soldiers, comrades and brothers, men of the Cohors Italica, men of my command, guard-details, I address you.

I've never been one for the vine-stick, I've never been a sergeant-major 'Hand-us-Another' to any man. We can do without a Lucilius in this mob, but we want no Vibulenus neither.

I would speak as Caesar's friend to Caesar's friends. I would say my heart, for I am in a like condemnation.

I too could weep  
for these Saturnian spells  
and for the remembered things.  
If you are Latins  
so am I.

If the glowing charcoal draws your hearts to braziers far from this parched Judaeon wall, does it not so draw my heart?

If the sour issue tot  
hardly enough to wet the whistle  
yet calls up in each of you  
some remembered fuller cup  
from Luna vats  
do not I too remember cups so filled  
among companions?  
the brews of known-site  
and the vintage hymn  
within a white enclosure  
our side Our Sea?  
No dying Gaul  
figures in the rucked circus sand  
his far green valley  
more clear than do I figure  
from this guard house door  
a little porch below Albanus.

No grave Teuton of the Agrippian *ala* rides to death on stifling marl-banks, where malarial Jordan falls to the Dead Meer, thinking of broad salubrious Rhine, more tenderly than do I think of muddled Tiber.

And we've lesser streams than Tiber  
and more loved  
more loved because more known  
more known,  
because our mothers' wombs  
were opened on their margins  
and our sisters' shifts  
laved the upper pools  
and pommelled snowy  
on the launder-banks.

These tributary streams we love so well make confluence with Tiber and Tiber flows to Ostia and is lost in the indifferent sea.

But Our Sea, you'll say, still *our sea*—you raise the impatient shout, still the Roman Sea, that bears up all the virtues of the Middle World, is tideless and constant, bringing the norm, without variation, to the several shores.

Are you party members  
doped with your own propaganda?

Or poets who must need weave dreams and yet more dreams, saleable dreams to keep the duns from doorstep, or have hearts as doting as those elder ministers who think the race of gods wear togas?

But you are soldiers  
with no need for illusion  
for, willy-nilly  
you must play the appointed part ...  
Listen! be silent!

you *shall* understand  
the horror of this thing.  
Dear brothers, sweet men, Italian loves  
it may not be.

We speak of ends and not of origins when Tiber flows by Ostia. The place is ill-named, for mouths receive to nourish bodies, but here the maw of the world sucks down all the variant sweets of Mother Italy and drains to world-sea the blessed differences: No longer the Veneti, no more Campanian, not the Samnite summer pipes nor the Apulian winter song, not the Use of Lanuvium nor the *Etrusca disciplina*, not Vetulonia of the iron fasces, not the Ayra of Praeneste in the gold fibulas, nor any of the things of known-site ...

our world-Maristuran  
marshals all to his world-sea.

Bucinator Taranus, swilling his quarter's pay with his Combrogian listing-mates, tough Lugubelinus and the radiant Maponus (an outlandish triad to wear the Roman lorica), maudlin in their barrack cups habitually remember some high hill-cymanfa; thus our canteens echo with:

'No more in dear Orddwy  
We drink the dear meddlyn'

or some such dolorous anamnesis.

Now we, for whom their Ordovician hills are yet outside the world (but shortly to be levelled to the world-plain) must think no

more of our dear sites or brews of this dear *pagus*, or that known enclosure loved of Pales, lest, thinking of our own, our bowels turn when we are commanded to storm the palisades of others and the world-plan be undone by plebeian pity.

As wine of the country  
sweet if drawn from wood  
near to the living wood  
that bore the grape  
sours if taken far  
so can all virtue curdle in transit  
so vice may be virtue uprooted  
so is the honey-root of known-site  
bitter fruit for world-floor.

The cultural obsequies must be already sung before empire can masquerade a kind of life.

What! does Caesar mime?  
are the world-boards his stage?

Do we, his actors, but mimic for a podium full of jeering gods what once was real?

That seems about the shape of it, O great Autocrator, whose commission I hold, but hold it I do, over and above the *sacramentum* that binds us all.

What then?  
Are we the ministers of death?  
of life-in-death?  
do we but supervise the world-death  
being dead ourselves  
long since?

Do we but organise the extension of death whose organisms withered with the old economies behind the living fences of the small localities?

Men of my command, guard details of the Antonia, soldiers of our Greater Europa, saviours of our world-hegemony, tiros or veterans, whichever you be, I have called you brothers, and so you are, I am your elder brother and would speak and command fraternally.

Already I have said enough to strip me of my office, but comrades I did so from a full heart, from a bursting heart, and knowing your hearts ...

but set the doors to  
let's stand within  
and altogether  
let's shut out  
the prying dawn.

I have things to say not for the world-wind to bear away but for your ears, alone, to hear.

I have spoken from a burning  
heart  
I speak now more cold  
(if even less advised)  
within these guard-house walls  
which do, here and for us  
enclose our home  
and we one family of one *gens*  
and I the *pater familias*  
these standards, the *penates*  
however shorn to satisfy  
the desert taboos  
of jealous baals.

This chitty's fire, our paternal hearth, these fatigue-men our sisters, busy with the pots,



so then, within this sacred college we can speak *sub rosa* and the rose that seals our confidence is that red scar that shines on the limbs of each of us who have had contact with the fire of Caesar's enemies, and if on some of us that scar burns, then on all, on you tiros no less than on these *veterani*

for all are members of the Strider's body.

And if not of one hope then of one necessity. For we all are attested to one calling not any more several, but one.

And one to what purpose?  
and by what necessity?

See! I break this barrack bread, I drink, with you, this issue cup, I salute, with you, these mutilated signa, I with you have cried with all of us the ratifying formula: *Idem in me!*

So, if the same oath serve,  
why, let the same illusions fall away.

Let the gnosis of necessity infuse our hearts,  
for we have purged out the leaven of illusion.

If then we are dead to nature  
yet we live  
to Caesar  
from Caesar's womb we issue  
by a second birth.  
Ah! Lucina!  
what irradiance  
can you bring  
to this parturition?  
What light brights this deliverance?  
From darkness  
to a greater dark  
the issue is.  
Sergeant, that shall serve, for now.

—Third Programme

## Queen of West Carberry

LENNOX ROBINSON on Edith Somerville

THOSE who know *The Adventures of an Irish R.M.* may have dubbed these tales old-fashioned, in fact, completely 'dated'. Yes, I admit they are dated just as *Surtees* is, just as *Pickwick's Dingley Dell* is dated, but to us who know our West Cork like the back of our hands, these tales are as alive and vivid, as photographic in character, as impeccable in a few lines of landscape painting, as when they first appeared sixty and more years ago.

It is true, I think, that there is only one mention of a motor-car in the stories and it is regarded suspiciously, and with awe, as much less to be relied on than an unbroken colt. Not that Edith Somerville did not move with the times; she did not despise motors. Years later, my friend Olive Guthrie, staying with her, laments how Edith would commandeer her car and command it to drive up narrow lanes and over furzy fields in search of a suitable place for a picnic (this passion for picnics seems a little dated), with the chauffeur swearing under his breath at the furze and bramble scratches on his beautiful car.

But this was characteristic of Edith—no one more generous than she; she was adored by her retainers but she was their mistress and they her servants, and it was quite in keeping for her to command her guest's car to convey her house-party 'o'er moor and fell'. She loved to have her own way and would stoop to any blandishments to get it.

She was—I have the word now—a matriarch. She was the first-born of her parents and ten years were to elapse before another child was born—again a girl—and after that there came what we call in Ireland a 'string of brothers', all in their various ways most distinguished, yet I am told that at breakfast the whole morning post would go to the eldest daughter and she would distribute the mail, scanning it and commenting on each letter: 'Another from that dreadful Lucy (or Kattie or whatever)', 'The bank manager is writing to you again', 'Hm . . . that's a handwriting I don't know', and having distributed she would settle down to her mail which after her visits to America assumed enormous bulk; but every letter must be answered by her own hand.

I never happened to be at breakfast with her for I never stayed at her house in West Cork, but I have visited there. I knew her best on her rather rare visits to Dublin. I think she wisely preferred to be queen of West Carberry, rather than to vie with some of the Dublin



Edith Somerville (left) and her cousin, Martin Ross, c. 1903

female wits—Sarah Purser, for instance. She would come to Dublin for a dinner given in her honour by the P.E.N. club or when the occasion came for her to receive the Gregory Medal from the Irish Academy of Letters, or when—most important of all—Trinity College, Dublin, made her a D.Litt. This was an honour she particularly valued, and woe betide you if you failed to address her as 'Doctor Somerville'. To an old friend addressing her at an agricultural show as 'Miss Somerville' she drew herself up haughtily and said 'Doctor Somerville, if you please'.

I think—I know—I was in awe of her, and if I had been one of her brothers I should have waited docilely for my letters until my eldest sister had vetted them.

It seems a little ironic that she should have been the recipient of the Gregory Medal, struck in memory of Lady Gregory and given only once in three years. For Lady Gregory disliked her work—especially the *R.M.* stories. Lady Gregory knew the Irish peasant through and through; she depicted him in her plays and in her folk-lore, she knew Gaelic and was able to meet him halfway, she never condescended. Edith Somerville—it seems an ungracious thing to say—just slightly condescends; she steps out of her big house, mounts her horse and—looks down.



Dr. Somerville: a photograph taken in 1932



So there is an element in her work which made her somewhat suspect to her writing contemporaries during the first twenty years of this century. Our more modern writers take a larger view, see that there is room in our jewel-chest of fiction for Flurry Knox and Slipper, as there is for Cuchulain of Muirthemne.

### The More Serious Novels

But I want to turn your attention to her more serious novels, particularly two, *The Real Charlotte* and *The Big House of Inver*. Her canvas is crowded with women as well as men; it is in her men that she excels yet the hero of *The Real Charlotte* is a woman with a woman's feeling for a worthless man. She is hard, relentless, almost all the things which we do not usually associate with the feminine quality. When we first see her through her creator's eyes she is driving to Lady Dysart's tennis party, she had emerged from her recent mourning that

since her aunt's death had so misbecome her fallow face . . . she was under no delusion as to her appearance and, early recognising its hopeless character, she had abandoned all superfluities of decoration. A habit of costume so defiantly simple as to border on eccentricity had at least two advantages: it freed her from the absurdity of seeming to admire herself, and it was cheap. . . . She had many tones of voice, according to the many facets of her character, and when she wished to be playful she affected a vigorous brogue, not perhaps being aware that her own accent scarcely admitted of being strengthened.

Miss Charlotte Mullen's pedigree was

reported to have been in her youth a national schoolmistress and her grandmother a bare-footed country girl. . . . Lady Dysart's serene radicalism ignored the inequalities of a lower class and she welcomed a woman who could talk to her on spiritualism, or books, or indeed on any current topic with a point and agreeability that made her accent, to English ears, merely the expression of a vigorous personality.

This is not a portrait of Edith Somerville but in many ways they are nearly related and it is not surprising that in old age she read again *Charlotte* and declared she liked to think of her as the best—that is, the finest—character she and Martin Ross had created.

I like to dwell on this book. The *R.M.* has stolen our hearts years ago and will continue to do so but I place *Charlotte* on the shelf cheek by jowl with George Moore's *Esther Waters*, the one so Irish, the other utterly English though written by an Irishman. I cannot say which I think is the finer book. In *Charlotte* I should have liked the threads at the end to have been a little knotted up, in the way Balzac so often does and Dickens with 'I seem to see', etc.; but perhaps the dramatic ending is best.

Martin Ross wrote to her cousin in 1912:

Yesterday I drove to see X-House. A great cut stone house of three storeys. It is on a long promontory by the sea, and there rioted three or four generations of Xs, living with country women, occasionally marrying them, all illegitimate four times over. About one hundred and fifty years ago a very grand Lady — married the head of the family and lived there, and was so corroded with pride that she would not allow her two daughters to associate with the neighbours of their own class. She lived to see them marrying two of the men in the yard.

Yesterday, as we left, an old Miss X, daughter of the last owner, was at the door in a little donkey-trap. She lives near in an old castle, and since her people died she will not go into X-House, or into the enormous yard, or the beautiful old garden.

She was a strange mixture of distinction and common sense, like her breeding, and it was very sad to see her at the door of that great house.

If we dared to write up—that subject —!

Yours ever, Martin

Three years later Martin Ross died, to Edith's inexpressible grief, but the project was not abandoned, *The Big House* was published in 1925, dedicated 'To Our Intention'. It may seem a little odd to people that from Martin Ross' death to the end of life (with one or two exceptions) the books came out under two names. But, as Edith Somerville, introducing *The Big House of Inver*, says:

An established Firm does not change its style and title when, for any reason, one of its partners may be compelled to leave it.

The partner who shared all things with me has left me, but the Firm has not yet put up the shutters, and I feel I am

justified in permitting myself the pleasure of still linking the name of Martin Ross with that of E. OE. Somerville.

Also, to her life's end, Edith Somerville believed she was very closely 'in touch' with her cousin.

Which brings us to the very difficult subject of the form the collaboration took, who suggested who and what dictated what. A few years before her death she was bullied into writing an essay about her collaboration with her cousin. It is reprinted in Miss Cummins' biography and, as the editor neatly says: '*Two of a Trade* is a thoroughly Irish masterpiece of evasion. You have merely poked fun at your inquisitor public and given away nothing of the least importance'. However, I think we can take it that the early chapters of *Charlotte* is Martin Ross' work and so, later on, is the wonderful description of Bray in winter. True, Edith had had some terms of education in the Alexandra School in Dublin but the pupils would not be likely to go to the north side of the city on a dusty August afternoon nor go to Bray in December. We gather from Miss Cummins' excellent book that Martin was a stickler for the right word in the right place, hated clichés and the obvious adjective. Probably Edith in the early days was wont to tumble ahead with her narrative until checked by Martin. Many of the *R.M.* stories were written with Martin incapable of holding a pen, in constant pain—the result of a hunting accident—but her brain as nimble as ever and ready to correct every sentence and every word and get it just to her liking.

The cousins did not meet until Martin was over twenty and Edith a few years older. It seemed to have been a perfect friendship, a collaboration of soul and spirit, and if Edith learned style from Martin, the style did not desert her when Martin passed on. The Martins came from Ross, County Galway; Edith Somerville came from West Cork, the Carberry country as we call it. *Charlotte* is, probably, laid in Connemara but the *R.M.* is indubitably West Cork and—if you are particular about the form the collaboration took—you may be sure that all the 'scenery' of the novels is Edith's. Martin was extremely short-sighted, Edith had an eagle's eye and all those precious vignettes we get—never intruding but just rightly there—which teem in the *R.M.* are Edith's. Besides, Edith was an artist and had studied seriously in Dusseldorf and Paris, and when at the end of her life she was asked how she would re-spend her life she said she would like to become a fine painter. Illustrations to a tour in Wales—quite early—show a pleasant feeling for composition, but I do not care much for her studies of men and women in West Cork; they are scrubbed in; *Charlotte* or *Shibby* of the *Big House* might have done them.

### Pageant on Horseback

But it would be silly of me not to hark back to the work by which she and Martin Ross will be inevitably connected. The canvas of the *R.M.* is thick with figures, old and young, rich and poor. They pass us by mostly on horseback. There is dear Flurry Knox who, as his creators pointed out, 'looked like a gentleman among stable-boys, a stable-boy among gentlemen'. His grandmother is in the procession, hauled in her basket-chair by a donkey, and she herself looking like 'a rag-bag held together by diamond brooches'. When Major Yeates, the *R.M.*, went to dine with her, she discoursed Virgil with him, gave him detestable soup in a splendid old silver tureen, a perfectly cooked salmon on a chipped kitchen dish, such cut glass as is not easy to see now-a-days, sherry that would burn the shell off an egg, and a bottle of port draped in immemorial cobwebs. Here come Bobbie Bennett and Sally Knox (who does marry her cousin Flurry in the end), and Doctor Hickey with his stomach-pump, and half-gents such as the MacRorys and stable-boys in profusion, and, above all, the immortal Slipper.

We have a saying in West Cork that kissing will be out of fashion when there is no blossom to be found on the furze. April and this May—the centenary of Edith Somerville's birth—are glittering with golden furze, but in late autumn and the depth of winter there will always be found a flicker of yellow, and the hunt is up and Flurry Knox and his troop are out for a day's hard riding, just as was related of them in the closing years of the last century by E. OE. Somerville and her cousin Martin Ross.

—Home Service



# The American Abroad

ALISTAIR COOKE on five types of tourist

I WANT to talk about American tourists because I am just about to become one. I am about to take off for what I call England, and what Americans call Europe. Sensing at once that this is a very provocative sentence all round, let me put it another way. A few years ago we were making plans for a long visit to Britain; no side trip to the continent of Europe was intended or even allowed. Friends would say to us 'I hear you're going to Europe', and my wife, whose spiritual home is Italy, would say without even a visible sigh: 'No, we're going to England'. The usual reply to this was: 'Well, it's the same thing, isn't it?', and that is a normal American response. But my wife had learned better; she had learned from me that Englishmen, too, talk about Europe, and they are not thinking of any Federal Union that includes the British Isles. I have often tried to explain this in a tactful way to some Americans who maintain that the whole distinction is a ridiculous quibble, and I can only reply sadly that if it is a quibble it is the sort of quibble which beheaded Mary Queen of Scots, which led to the invention of the British Navy, which in our time moved Englishmen to fight on without a second thought after Europe was trampled on and France had caved in.

I have often thought of writing a little book about the seemingly minute differences between Britain and the United States which are in fact fundamental differences of sentiment, of principle, of their separate views of life. Of course there are innumerable differences, big and little, which can be easily understood and which are colourful but unimportant. For instance, Britons have a passion for tea-drinking because it became easily available to them when their Empire developed. Americans rejected tea-drinking during the War of Independence, because it was legally unavailable to them and for a long time afterwards it was considered unpatriotic to drink the drink of the defeated enemy. By then they were taking coffee from Central and South America, though during the revolution they switched to rum, which is the oldest and the most traditional of American drinks, because it was a staple product of the West Indies colonies. To this day there is a stiff tax on the import of British rum, on the theory that it competes with the American rums from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Incidentally, the American preference is for the light clear rums as against the dark British types; another example of people first taking what they can most easily get and then coming to like it.

Let us go back to the delicate misunderstanding which is almost universal among Americans, that the British Isles are a part of Europe. They say, 'Well for heaven's sake, look at a map', and of course that is the only sense, geographically, that it is so. An American has to live for a reasonably long stretch in England or know a good deal of English history before he appreciates the Englishman's sense of emotional and national independence from Europe. This feeling which is dramatised for the stranger by the mere existence of the English Channel is not unique; the Spanish have a much harder time than the British explaining that they, too, are independent, because the map gives the lie to their profound feeling that once over the Pyrenees you have left Europe and modern times behind and are in a separate and proudly medieval kingdom.

I have noticed that among American travellers to Europe there

are roughly five groups. First there are the American business men who make an annual or semi-annual trip to visit the countries, or rather the cities, where they have business interests, and see these places at various times of the year. They tend to pick their favourite capitals early, and the favourite resorts to which they beat a convenient retreat after the deal is consummated or falls through. The business men I know of this kind are usually more knowledgeable than any of the four other groups about the present psychology of the nations they visit. I mean the feeling now about political issues, the national economy, the particular gifts and weaknesses of the different countries in their ways of work.

These sound like large sentences and they may convey to you the false impression that the business men I know are children of Aristotle out of Mark Twain. I did stress the phrase the 'present psychology' of the French, the Germans, the British.

It is a clumsy phrase, but I cannot think of a better one to describe the ebb and flow of prejudices, fashions, anxieties that every nation has at a given time. The judgement of these business men may be shaky or superficial, and sometimes they have no judgement at all because they are blinded by the *clichés* they learned in school and are incapable of looking at a foreign country with their own eyes. They know ahead of time that the British are stuffy and precise, the Italians childlike and lazy,

the Germans solemn but terrific workers, the French mercurial. They consequently, and quite unconsciously, go looking for a precise Englishman, a lazy Italian, a solemn German; and, of course, they find them.

Some people—it's a temperamental thing, I guess—get disturbed whenever the truth does not fit a formula that they keep on file in their heads. It may be unfair to single out American business men for these strictures; they would be true of any other group that had to visit a foreign country twice a year and then for very brief periods. I know such a man who has been going to Britain for twenty-odd years. He has never been outside London and he has never been in London for longer than forty-eight hours. He has therefore never been to Hampton Court, but he has walked all over Chelsea and Camden Town as well as Mayfair, and on the whole he talks more sense about Britain and the British than some people of the other groups who spend more time, roam far and wide, and follow the guide-book routine.

The disadvantages of travelling on business are, I suppose, fairly obvious: you stay close to a single preoccupation, you are cut off from ordinary homes, you naturally react towards the natives with pleasure or pain according to your success in trading with them. But a business man has certain advantages over a tourist: he gets to know one segment of a foreign population deeply; he sees these people at their daily jobs and they provide him with a true picture of a working society, whereas the natives that the tourist sees tend to be like movie extras, wandering on the lawn in front of Salisbury Cathedral, filling the other tables in a restaurant, looking colourful and anonymous as they herd their sheep in Scotland.

The business man tends at least to participate and the tourist to be a spectator. I have almost included the second group as a sort of counterpoint to the first, and this would be the group of tourists plain and simple, or sometimes complicated and fussy. I am now thinking of the tourist who is going to Europe on a





first or second visit and usually in summer; he arranges his itinerary at home; he digests travel pamphlets; his choice of a tour is dictated by places that he has heroic or picturesque ideas about, and nowadays, also, places he has seen in the movies. He might meet Katharine Hepburn.

There are two powerful motives in this kind of tourist. He wants to get to somewhere as much unlike home as possible, though he'd sock you if you told him so. If he lives in Pittsburgh I doubt he will have a yen to go to Manchester; and he would like to live for a time, if only as a kind of play acting, a romantic, slightly aristocratic life, as different as possible from what he knows as the life of a socially equalitarian country, for America is certainly that. Americans call it democracy and assume by contrast that poor old Europe is only just learning to lisp at the knees of good old mother democracy, a vague and bosomy lady with a striking resemblance to the Statue of Liberty.

This confusion between equality and democracy is irritating to you, I know, but you will have to put up with it in many amiable and well-meaning Americans. The fact is that Americans tire in secret of their homeland in which any man, no matter what his accent and provided only he is not a Negro and in some places a Jew, can dress, eat, act as he pleases, just go where he likes if he can pay for it. They want to get to a country where they can live the way they think the natives live. The natives are always genially upper-class, devoted to food, drink, hospitality. They have seventeenth-century country houses at worst, preferably medieval castles, all very historical and flattering. This is how the prosperous American tourist feels; the more humble, however, also have an insatiable appetite for looking at castles, chateaux, cathedrals, and grand ruins. At home they would be uncomfortable with them; but they are, after all—are they not?—what Europe has to offer.

You may fume at this, but it is not more condescending than the assumption of many Europeans that what America has to offer is skyscrapers, movie stars, juvenile delinquents, gadgets, fat automobiles and baseball, with never a thought given to the beauties of the landscape, the historical places in America, the universities and scholarship, regional foods, contemporary literature, or what have you. I see that the tourist of this sort is coming out badly in this catalogue and I had better move on.

### Back to the Homeland

The third group are the Americans who are simply paying a long-promised visit to the homeland, by which I mean to Italy or Germany or Poland or Czechoslovakia or Scandinavia, and most of all to the town in which they were born or their father was born, or their uncles or parents still live. You will not see them. These people are in for an experience which has little to do with professional travelling or tourism. It is the deep experience of going back to their roots, their origins, and for most of such people, I dare to say, it is a disturbing and poignant experience, and for most of them whose parents were very poor and took the risk of pretending that America meant deliverance from pogroms, from bigotry, from actual servitude—for most of these sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters, a good deal healthier and bolder than their forebears ever were, the visit confirms their deepest beliefs about the triumph of the American dream, the belief that America really does offer the ordinary man a new chance and a new status. This can be a very smug belief, and it spawns some of the more awful American publicity and propaganda, but when it is confirmed in the flesh by the humble people I have in mind, by the experience of returning to the village from which their peasant grandfather escaped, it surely should not offend any of us.

The fourth group are those people, Anglophiles usually, who are English by distant origin and to whom Europe means only England. This group ought to warm the cockles of your heart, but with some splendid exceptions I regret to tell you it does not. It tends to contain far too many people who like England for what—and I am treading on very delicate ground here—I can only call the wrong reasons. They would like to be more like what they think the English are, and less like their American selves; they affect English customs, including some that are, even in England, affectations. I will not go on about them; they do America no credit and I am sorry to tell you that when they

get back home they do England no good at all, for they only confirm in sensible people who have never been to England their worst fears about England and the English.

The fifth type—I have forgotten what it was; maybe it's me, who I am sure am a mixture of all the other four, but in the main I am a spy, a clinical student of other people's behaviour. It sounds superior but it's a lot of fun, and I am happy to think that in England nobody knows what I look like, so I shall wander anonymous as a cloud, shadowing you in sunny places, eaves-dropping under your eaves and taking notes.—*Home Service*

## Boat Song

Over the enormous billow  
Sped my boat an easy thing,  
Down into the water's hollow  
Sauntered like a vale of spring.

In the lion's cage or den  
Holy children take no harm;  
First the appalling silence, then  
Hear the flowering of the psalm.

Safety in the heart of danger  
Chosen ones who know the way:  
Others fall to the avenger,  
Others look and run away.

HAL SUMMERS

## The Escape Route

Every night in the prison tents they dreamed  
Of a cloaked musician walking slowly along—  
They saw his back—unwinding an old song  
From a hurdy-gurdy. To their delight it seemed  
The tune was sure however the handle turned.  
Their own capricious music had been burned  
Long ago in the square, when they were damned.

In the prison camp they hankered every day  
For a land where sorrow smelled as delicate  
As wild flowers, and where everyone they met  
Was dark and protective as a prophecy,  
Where after each black year the weather whitened  
In a destiny of snow, where fingers straightened  
The crescent moon that might bewitch the way.

They were the secret planners, with their maps  
Of flight drawn long before their bondage. Bars  
And keys were fashioned many clamorous years  
Later than their deep files and spades and ropes.  
They turned defeat in their pockets like a coin,  
Felt its hard comfort nuzzling into the groin,  
And saw in the stars a zodiac of escapes.

Paolo and Francesca, as they held their lamp  
Of love dry over hell, turned back to gaze  
At the room where they were happy, and they froze  
Quiet on the storm with pain. But in the damp  
Tents, the planners worked out all the time  
How they would step out of their sorrow, climb  
The hill, and look round, praising, at the camp.

They found their escape route, all the prisoners.  
Against all laws, the road came to their feet.  
But ghosts were the first free men that they met  
And grief came colder than the hillside flowers  
Where they stood looking down, shaken with scents,  
And speechless at the beauty of the tents  
In which they might have lived for many years.

PATRICIA BEER



# The New Realism in French Literature

By OLIVIER TODD

**T**O be frank, most of the poetry published in France today is monotonous and senseless. Criticism is either platitudinous and pompous or pedantic and precious. The short story as a serious *genre* hardly exists. If you are looking for some sort of stimulant you have to turn to the theatre and, more recently, to the novel. Ever since Ronsard and the Pleiade, the French have insisted as much on having literary schools as on a literature flavoured with philosophy and politics. As soon as a certain number of writers seem to have something in common, they are given a name—and called names. This is characteristic of the so-called French literary scene which is almost exclusively a Parisian one. Ten years ago critics wondered how existentialist a new book was. The last sophisticated move consists in finding out if a novelist is a New Realist.

Thus Alain Robbe-Grillet, Michel Butor, Claude Simon, Samuel Beckett have been put in the same category as Nathalie Sarraute and Marguerite Duras. Sometimes Maurice Blanchot, Robert Pinget, Paul Gegauff and Hélène Bessette are conveniently allowed room on the same shelf. The stuffiest reviewers with a seat in the Académie Française assert testily that these writers are the *avant-garde*. Even when they dislike their pills they admit they have set up an interesting laboratory. However different they may be, they are working in the same direction. They are on their way though they are not always clear where they are going.

## 'Art Is Sufficient unto Itself'

The theoretician of these general tendencies is unquestionably Robbe-Grillet. His followers are very prudent. His opponents are sceptical. His audience is still pretty puzzled. In the last three years he has campaigned for his doctrines with the spirit and the bitterness of a crusader. He is a true fanatic. The sturdiness with which he has thrown himself into his critical battle is remarkable. He enjoys putting the articles of his creed bluntly. 'Instead of a universe of meanings (psychological, social, and functional)', he says, 'one must try to construct a more solid, more immediate world'. He manages to dismiss most of the writing of the last fifty years without being too precise as to the authors involved. He is fascinated by what he calls 'objects' and 'gestures'. According to him they are the essential stuff of the novel. He argues they ought to impose themselves by their presence, dominate and crush 'any explanatory theory that would enclose them in a system of reference, whether it be sentimental, sociological, freudian or metaphysical'. The *roman à thèse* is exercised with formulae such as: 'Art if it is anything is EVERYTHING. It is sufficient unto itself and there is nothing beyond it'.

Robbe-Grillet is full of contempt for the traditional apparatus of criticism. A sentence of the so-and-so-has-something-to-say-and-says-it-well type sounds absolutely ridiculous to him. He exclaims: 'Couldn't it be said, on the contrary, that the real writer has nothing to say? He must create a world out of nothing, out of dust'. Using his own jargon, one might say that Robbe-Grillet as a novelist has nothing to say but puts it well when he does not resort to rather worn-out stunts. In *Le Voyeur*, for instance, the main episode, the climax, has to be imagined by the reader, left with a white page.

His last novel, *La Jalousie*, whether the author wants it or not, is at times an excellent study of a classical passion in the manner of William James and nineteenth-century analytical psychology. One of the three main characters, the woman, has no name. She goes about as 'A'. The friend—perhaps also the lover—is 'Frank'. The third, the narrator, has no identity. For his descriptions, Robbe-Grillet, who was trained as an engineer, uses the vocabulary of the mathematician. He writes of 'x kilometers', 'y florins', of 'angles of so many degrees', as if things had to be set in a kind of eternal mathematics to gain a valid literary status. In this new hunt for the absolute, measurements replace emotions.

Yet this universe is not an objective one. It is a world of objects—a very different thing.

In *Les Gommages*, *Le Voyeur*, and *La Jalousie* you have on the one hand immediate, unconnected feelings, sensations, ideas and on the other tables, chairs, a town, an island, a watch. Solipsistic heroes wander on a lunar landscape creating a strange but unconvincing atmosphere. Trying desperately to get away from the writing that could be interpreted, Robbe-Grillet has fallen back on private allegory. Camus in *L'Etranger* attempted something similar perhaps but knowing very well that meaning could always be attributed to any story. Robbe-Grillet is rather like an alchemist: his aim is an impossible one but his activities are bewitching.

His theories and his novels cannot coincide. When he has put them together, you are left not with the Universal Novelist of the Age but with an intelligent Frenchman of the nineteen-fifties with odd creative gifts and a critical appetite large enough to absorb, pell-mell, paradoxes, truisms, and straightforward self-contradictions and nonsense. Breaking the spell, you start wondering why he is so keen to profess today, in 1958 and in France, that 'Art is only a Form and that it is probably the Form of the World'. Why is he so fond of ill-digested Hegelianism? He wants his characters to come out of nothingness, unbaptised by ideas whether they be responsibility, guilt, or social reformism. This does not prove that he himself speaks from an ivory tower. He wants his storyless stories to be detached from contemporary history, but they are themselves part of the evolution of the novel in the last fifty years. They may be the rough sketches of a new language but they are also the last slightly decadent products of the development of France since the Liberation. They are the burlesque parodies of the surrounding political and social confusion. They do not transcend it; they duplicate it, however subtly. Their obscurity, ambiguity, and looseness is getting worse and worse. Their fundamental despair is the aesthetic expression of wider conflicts.

## Claude Simon's 'Le Vent'

The best possible example of the New Realism at its worst is *Le Vent*, by Claude Simon. It is an extraordinary, baroque book. A man doomed from his mother's womb, half cretin and half dreamer, with a passion for photography, comes back to a windswept village to inherit a piece of land. Without the required knowledge, without capital and faced with the hostility of all the *bien-pensants*, he wants to take care of his vineyards. He puts up at a hotel and more or less falls in love with the maid, herself the mistress of a gypsy who used to be a boxer. The couple entrust their friend with a stolen jewel-box. At one point thinking they are going to be caught by the police, they commit suicide. Finally, after a curious affair with a cynical cousin of his, the hero abandons the provincial backwaters where he was looking one never knows exactly for what.

*Le Vent* manages to be both a pretentious detective novel without a plot and an excursion in literary aphasia. Its purple patches are like a very bad translation into French of Faulkner's least digestible pieces. You go from a three-page sentence, packed full with cold synonyms, to a series of phrases ending with a profusion of not very illuminating dots. The solitary fool or saint that keeps the fragments together stammers his way through to the end. Lautréamont once celebrated the accidental meeting of an umbrella and a sewing machine on an operating table. He has been beaten. As an epigraph and, alas, an epitaph to *Le Vent*, Simon quotes Valéry: 'Two dangers ceaselessly threaten the world, order and disorder'. After going through Simon's latest work, one feels that if the old-fashioned and the popular novel simplify everything to their tale, some would-be modern writers destroy everything by expressing psychological disorder in an



incredibly tiresome and chaotic way. Kafka at least saw that disorder can be expressed with an orderly technique. Experimental novels like *Le Vent* are as tedious by now as so many long-winded surrealist poems. Complexity is never an excuse for soporific prose.

### Michel Butor

Michel Butor, the most gifted of the New Realists, is far more careful in his digressions. He has achieved a clever synthesis between a new form and a conventional subject-matter presented with a solid structure. Butor is not merely esoteric. He is really not painfully original. *La Modification* is written neither in the first person nor in the indirect style. From the first to the last sentence the person used is the plural of politeness, *vous*, a queer and in the long run hypnotising figure of speech—and now of writing. A trick, but an effective one. The author then is neither a narrator recalling memories nor an omniscient observer. Neither witness nor culprit, he seems to have the privileges of the reader and no more. The conventions bringing together the novel and the reader take on a fresh quality. The anecdote is thin but it keeps one alert as none of Robbe-Grillet's or Simon's does.

Léon Delmont, manager of the Paris branch of an Italian firm of typewriters, has decided to go to Rome and tell his mistress, Cécile, he has at last decided to leave his wife, Henriette. He will give up everything, family and position. He will bring Cécile to Paris. He takes the train. Travelling third class for once, he has plenty of time to meditate on his past, on his relations with Henriette and Cécile. Little by little before reaching the Stazione Termini, his whole outlook has been modified. He discovers that his love for Cécile is undistinguishable from his love for Rome. When he reaches Rome and realises that he will not even see Cécile, he has not given up anything. He has just become himself once more. As passengers come and go in his carriage, Léon tries to imagine what they are: and through his imaginary reconstructions one sees what *he* is. With its precise, microscopic descriptions, *La Modification* is certainly the most remarkable of all literary train journeys.

Yet, when you have finished the novel, you are dissatisfied. You know everything about Léon Delmont but strictly nothing about yourself or others. This might be said of all the New Realists. They can build up a setting, break up Space and Time, invent characters interesting despite, and often on account of, their triviality. They can communicate the absurdity and the contingency of their small landscapes, but they lack—for some of them systematically, willingly—an outlook, a view of life. After reading them, you may look at ordinary objects differently, your eyesight is perhaps more sensitive, but you are no further towards appreciating the relations of men to objects or to other human beings.

Sartre has said that every great novelist has a metaphysics, meaning, partly, that his works include and offer, consciously or not, a way of perceiving, organising, and interpreting experience as well as latent moral preoccupations. I think this is true and that in this sense the New Realists are not great novelists. Nevertheless they are useful because they have revived an interest in critical problems and a more lucid approach to style. Owing to them the novel may not have changed for the better but it has changed. They have begun to shake the reading public out of its complacency and passivity.

### Distressing Lack of Humour

That is probably their main common factor, together with a distressing lack of humour. Their attitude to the reader is definitely terroristic. Every one of their works seems to contend that reading should on no account be entertaining. With them one can never relax. Going through these writings is an essay in deep-sea diving with oxygen carefully rationed. Occasionally the air-pipe gets blocked and you are left alone to stifle. Even the shorter books require time, unlimited patience, and a good deal of energy. Marguerite Duras, who has unfortunately joined the chapel, has succeeded, in the 150 pages of *Moderato Cantabile*, in distilling boredom. I think that is a pity because in previous works like *Le Marin de Gibraltar* or *Un Barrage Contre le Pacifique* she wrote some very good classical novels.

With all these novelists one must expect neither a story nor characters in the ordinary sense. One thought that from that point

of view one had been vaccinated with *Ulysses* and *As I Lay Dying*. Joyce and Faulkner had done away with the simple plot, the neat chronology, and the stock emotions. The aim of the New Realism at its purest is to do away completely with human beings and narrative. In the best products these ingredients are of course still found, as *ersatz* at least. Robbe-Grillet and others confess with humility that they have not quite achieved what they proposed to do. The actual existing novels are mere approximations, imperfect appearances of the perfect essence. As things stand the reader often confesses that the results do not tally with the theories. One cannot prevent him from sulking by just saying that he must get rid of the common routine of reading. Why should reading be unenjoyable, especially if on top of it it is uninformative?

### The Historical Context

To be understood, the New Realism must ultimately be replaced in its historical context even if it pretends to be detached from it. When Balzac, Flaubert, and Stendhal were given academic status in the nineteen-twenties, it was felt that the world they seemed to own was crumbling. The more active and speculative novelists returned to the cult of subjectivity, to the individual. Hence the vivid interest then in Proust, Kafka, and Dostoevsky. To conscious subjectivity the dadaists and the surrealists added *ad nauseam* the exploration of the unconscious, considered, whatever they may have said, as literary material. In the 'thirties the tide turned. Helped by the vitality of French Marxism, writers were interested in the outside world, in characters as products of their social and economic background. The introspective, well-padded boudoir of Proust was replaced by the behaviouristic continent of Dos Passos. American writers were not only fashionable: they were used as models as they have never been, I think, in England.

Just before the second world war Malraux, Aragon, or Nizan wrote politically committed novels of a high quality. After 1945, a French Socialist Realism produced extremely sentimental and crude works. M. André Stil got a Stalin prize but few writers take his writing seriously. However, his failure was important in a country where writers feel they must be involved politically. Roger Vailland, the 1957 Prix Goncourt, gave up committed writing. In *La Loi*, the only character with an explicit political attitude is the Italian worker who will not give up his party card in order to be able to go abroad. He is purely episodic. Coming from the best Communist novelist it looks like a nostalgic farewell.

Meanwhile the gloriously futile kind of writing illustrated by Sagan, Peyrefitte, or Louise de Vilmorin acquired an importance which it had not had for years. At the same time, the political, and especially the colonial, situation became more and more intricate. Writers with humanistic leanings and left-wing sympathies had to swallow Budapest and Algeria. It seems to have been too much. Thus, the New Realism appears to be among other things a double reaction: one against a populist whining story-telling and another against the contented, so-called bourgeois style. The New Realists do not express but they reflect a political decline in which the liberal intellectual remains helpless. The blooming of this school in the nineteen-fifties is no accident. Its minute scrutiny of a limited world contrasts sadly with its incapacity to cope with a larger one. The literary revolution of the New Realists looks very much like an idealistic counter-revolution. They are the effects of the ideological woolliness of a vast number of French intellectuals. With them, creative energy is pushed aside by unpleasant facts and recoils on itself. This New Realism is a negative by-product; like the old Socialist one, it has been incapable of grasping a meaningful, a moving, or a suggestive Reality.

—Third Programme

Among recent publications are: *The Economics of International Migration*, edited by Brinley Thomas (Macmillan, 45s.); *Stability and Progress in the World Economy*, edited by D. C. Hague (Macmillan, 25s.); *Theory and History*, by Ludwig von Mises (Cape, 30s.); *The Economic Development of Radio*, by S. G. Sturme (Duckworth, 30s.); and *Variation and Heredity*, by H. Kalmus (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 28s.).



# Lord Rothermere Came to Lunch

By SEWELL STOKES

WHEN a cousin of Lord Rothermere, with whose family I was living at the time, mentioned casually that he was coming to lunch the following day, it's no use pretending that I wasn't thrilled. In those days—the mid-'twenties—I was young enough still to be impressed by the thought of meeting famous persons. It is true I had met a number of famous artists, actors, and writers; but I had never before met a press baron; and now I was going to meet one who not only was a power in Fleet Street but whose political influence—for better or for worse—was generally acknowledged to be very considerable indeed.

Lord Rothermere had once been described by one of his more violent critics, as, 'next to President Poincaré, the chief architect of the most catastrophic episode since the war'; the first world war, that is. It seemed to me that if a man was 'bad enough to have done that, he must certainly be well worth meeting. Also he was a millionaire, the thought of which intrigued me; for I had never believed that millionaires would look and behave quite like ordinary people. I was thinking, of course, not of men who had inherited their wealth, but of those who had started out in life more or less penniless; as, indeed, Lord Rothermere had done, in the days when he was plain Mr. Harold Harmsworth.

At dinner on the evening before the arrival of our luncheon-guest, conversation naturally turned on him. Our host entertained us with intimate stories of Lord Rothermere. He referred to him always as 'young Harold', and to his brother, the late Lord Northcliffe, as 'young Alfred'. 'Young Alfred', 'young Harold' and my host had as boys all lived together in a small house in Abbey Road, St. John's Wood, where my host's mother had looked after them. Chiefly we were entertained that evening with an account of the adventures these three young men engaged in; none of them adventures in the story-book sense, but rather a series of youthful enterprises, the object of which was always financial gain. They hoped to make their fortune, and to that end used every ounce of imagination and energy they possessed. I remember one story—it must have been in their earliest days—when the three boys decided to become agents for 'Tonk's Pills'. They purchased a large quantity at a reduced rate and marketed the little boxes up and down the street. But this particular venture was not a great success, and for a long time afterwards the house was littered with the left-over pill-boxes they had been unable to sell.

Another story dealt with a somewhat later period. The dreamed-of fortune as yet showed no signs of becoming a reality. However, 'young Alfred' was already playing about with small trade papers, and playing quite successfully. But he had other, more ambitious ideas; and one of these was to bring out a paper called *Answers to Correspondence*. Even at that time he recognised in his brother Harold, who would one day be Lord Rothermere, a financial genius. So he said to my host—whose name, by the way, was Arthur Hendry—'Look, Arthur, I want you to do something. Get Harold to join me. I can't possibly tackle the business side without him. So will you see what you can do?'

To which Hendry replied: 'But what's the use? You know

very well that Harold now has a safe job in the Civil Service, and would be very unlikely to throw it up for an uncertainty. When he retires from his present job, he says that he's certain of one hundred and sixty pounds a year pension'.

'I know', said Alfred, 'but all the same, I've got to have him working for me'.

My host, Mr. Hendry, was supposed at that time to have some influence with Harold, so he undertook to do what he could; that is, to try to persuade him into sacrificing his certain £160 a year pension for the risk of starting a new paper with his brother. 'In that case', said Alfred, the future Lord North-

cliffe, 'I'll pay all the expenses. Here's three shillings. Take Harold to the gallery of some theatre and talk him into doing what I want. It may not be easy, but I'm counting on you'.

So off to a theatre the two men went, young Arthur Hendry and young Harold Harmsworth; one entrusted with the responsibility of persuading the other to give up his safe billet for a mere speculation. The theatre they chose was the Lyceum, where Sir Henry Irving was acting in that famous old melodrama, 'The Bells'. But I am afraid the great actor did not, that night, receive the undivided attention of at least two members of his audience, seated high up in the gallery. Their minds were otherwise occupied; and when they left the theatre after the performance Harold was still undecided as to whether or not he should jeopardise his future. It still seemed to him that discretion might be the better part of valour.

Now, to my mind, comes the most romantic part of the story. When the two young men had left the theatre they discovered that they had not

enough money between them to pay their fare back to St. John's Wood. So they were obliged to walk. And it was during that long walk through the lamp-lit streets of London that Harold was finally persuaded to leave his job in the Civil Service. I like to think, though of course it may not be strictly accurate, that on that one small fact—the lack of a few pence with which to pay the bus-fare home—rested the whole foundation of the Harmsworth fortune. So often the obscure little facts seem to count more in life in the end than the seemingly important ones. A tiny spark is struck, and may quickly vanish into the darkness—or shoot up into a blaze.

*Answers to Correspondence*, edited and managed by the two brothers in partnership, only flickered at first. Few people know that this paper, which ceased publication only two years ago, started with its second issue. This was necessary, because nobody can answer questions that have not been asked. But issue number one, in which the editor asked the questions, was privately printed and kept in the office in case anybody wanted to see it. By paying attention to such details as this, the enormous success of the Harmsworth publications was built up. But, as I said, the first few numbers of *Answers* were not much of a success, and it looked as if Harold would have done better to stick to that safe job of his; when suddenly Alfred was inspired with the brilliant, and in those days unheard-of, idea of giving as a prize for some competition or other 'a pound a week for life'. Immediately a huge public was captured by this novel idea,



Lord Rothermere (1868-1940): a photograph taken in 1927



and after that Alfred and Harold never, as they say, looked back.

It was a brilliant, sunny day on which Rothermere was expected to lunch: one of those blue and golden days that make the French Riviera so attractive. Mr. Hendry's villa was up in the hills behind Antibes, and the distinguished guest was coming over from Monte Carlo. I remember thinking before he arrived how nice it would be if he should ask me what I did. I would tell him I was a freelance journalist, and, learning this, he might ask me why I didn't write some articles for the *Daily Mail*, of which he was the owner. But as it turned out he never asked me about myself at all; so that was that.

### Unsmiling and Curt

He arrived at the villa in his chauffeur-driven car, accompanied by the editor of the *Continental Daily Mail*. One or two other guests were staying at the villa, and we were introduced to him in the garden. He didn't bother to smile but acknowledged our presence with a curt nod: we might have been recruits lined up for his inspection, I felt. None of us—with the exception of Mr. Hendry, to whom his lordship was merely an older version of 'young Harold', the ex-agent for Tonk's Pills—could help feeling somewhat in awe of him. He reminded one in appearance of a hippopotamus, chiefly owing to the thickness of what was known in his family as the 'Harmsworth lip'. Somehow, although he was nothing out of the ordinary to look at, he managed to be impressive, rather in the way that a bomb is impressive because you are aware of its power to explode. He spoke little, but listened very carefully to any remark that was made, and when he failed to catch the significance of a remark, said 'What?', rather too sharply to be comforting. You felt that nothing was missed, that he was all the time summing you up; and that as a professional interrogator he would have been an asset to Scotland Yard. Eventually we drifted into lunch. He drank only water, fidgeted most of the time with a piece of bread, ate very sparingly, and informed us at the end of the meal that he never smoked. From his manner of imparting this piece of information it was clear that he had not a great deal of sympathy with anyone who did.

For the most part his conversation, which was not prolific, was of what you might call an international character. He spoke less of what people were doing than of what countries were up to. Listening to him I was reminded of an afternoon I had once spent at the house of Wickham Steed, the famous political journalist who edited *The Times* for Lord Northcliffe during the years of the first world war. Men and women representing fifteen different nations were there, gabbling to one another over slices of cake and cups of tea. Not once, I think, did their remarks descend to the personal. There was an air in that house of international intrigue. You would not have been surprised if the housemaid had whispered, as she took you up the staircase, 'I'm sorry things look so black in Europe, sir'. I remember I was introduced to a lady who remarked, without wasting a moment on the present state of the weather, that the situation in Turkey was grim. She immediately turned to a friend, who agreed, and added: 'If there's not an improvement in Germany, I fear the worst'. All round me, it seemed, empires were crumbling, thrones tottering.

I may say pessimism coloured nearly all of Lord Rothermere's remarks that day at lunch, though for the most part he reserved his gloom for the home front. Someone at the table volunteered the information that he owned a street of houses in Poplar. 'You do?' snapped Lord Rothermere, 'then you'd better sell 'em quickly, or they won't be there to sell. Isn't that right?' He turned to the editor of the *Continental Daily Mail*. Indeed, he turned to his editor for an opinion—or a confirmation, rather—after every statement he made; and unfailingly, upon every such occasion, his editor replied, 'That's right, sir!' I wondered what would have happened if the editor, by way of a change, had contradicted his master.

I cannot think how it was that I, the least important of the guests, suddenly dared to address his lordship. But I did: I asked him a question, which, coming out of a deathly silence, sounded even more absurd than it was. I had been brought up, as it were, on the old joke that the *Daily Mail* had once offered a prize of £10,000 to the first man who gave birth to a baby. Was this true, I asked the paper's owner. 'Never heard that before', said

Rothermere. He didn't smile, but just stared at me. Then, abruptly, he said: 'In any case, the film rights alone would be worth far more than that'.

It was then that my host—who, now that I come to think of it, probably enjoyed taking his cousin down a peg or two—asked him if he had read an article in that week's *Truth*. The article apparently had much to say in praise of a rival press baron, but was less favourably disposed towards Rothermere. Rothermere's attention was alert at once. He said he had not seen the article. Could it be produced, at once? A servant was sent to fetch the periodical. When he returned with it, Rothermere lost all interest in the meal—even stopped fidgeting with his bread—and solemnly read the article through. We watched him in silence, awaiting his verdict as if it concerned us personally. When he had finished the article, his lordship put it aside with a contemptuous smile and observed: 'My rival appears to be doing very well for himself. I've no doubt he paid handsomely to have that written about him'. He turned to his editor: 'Isn't that right?'

'That's right, sir', the editor hastened to assure him.

But if this was another example of the attention paid by self-made millionaires to every detail which concerned them and their business affairs, an even more impressive one was yet to come. Each day our copy of the *Continental Daily Mail* arrived at the villa, not from the local newsagent but direct from the publisher's office. But on this particular morning for some reason or other it had not come; and the fact of its non-arrival cropped up in the conversation because when he was asked if he had noticed a news item in it our host had to excuse himself for not having done so. Rothermere was genuinely alarmed. 'It didn't arrive this morning?' he said. 'What an extraordinary thing!' He turned to his editor. 'Hear that? The paper didn't come this morning. Look into it when you get back to the office, will you?'

'I will, sir', said the editor, and appeared deeply distressed.

'And in the meantime, please take mine', said Rothermere. He took a folded copy of the paper from his pocket and handed it to his cousin with the air of someone presenting a prize. Never before or since have I seen the *Daily Mail* taken quite so seriously.

As he was about to leave us Rothermere paused in front of his cousin's car standing in the drive. 'How much did you pay for that?' he asked. A price was named. 'Did you hear that?' he said, this time to his chauffeur. 'Only half what ours cost, and it looks a much better job'. With that, looking none too happy, he got into his own car and was driven away: his editor sitting silently beside him.

After the guest's departure, more stories were told of him by his cousin. He had once asked Rothermere what he paid his chauffeur, and when he was told £500 a year and his keep he had remarked that it seemed a lot—which in those days it was. 'A lot!' Rothermere had said. 'I'd have thought my life was worth £10 a week'. He was fond enough of life never to touch food served in a restaurant car on a train. Hampers were packed for him specially, he was afraid of being poisoned. 'And', his cousin said, 'unless he's changed his tastes since he was a boy, there'll always be a cake in that hamper'. As a boy Harold went with his brother Alfred to the house of a Mrs. Jealous, who lived on Hampstead Heath. While they waited for tea to be brought in Harold sat expectantly silent. Presently Alfred turned to his hostess and said: 'Do you know what Harold's thinking about? Cakes!'

### A Lonely Man?

I got the impression that Lord Rothermere was a lonely man, as no doubt many very rich men are, particularly when they are surrounded by yes-men, although it cannot be said that on the occasion of our meeting he displayed much charm. Others had felt the same way about him, I gather. Once Mr. Edwin Ward the portrait painter had painted Alfred and Harold. This commission was followed by one from Mark Twain. The artist asked his maid: 'Well, how do you like Mark Twain?' And she replied, 'Oh, sir, what a relief after them 'Armsworths'.

I have never written an article for the *Daily Mail*. But I wrote my first one for *Answers*: and, to go back to the beginning, I might not have done that if two young men, long, long ago, had not found themselves without the bus fare from the Strand to St. John's Wood.—*Home Service*



# Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

## Selling Your Car and Keeping Your Word

Sir,—As many cases are now reaching the magistrates' courts regarding the sale of unroadworthy vehicles, it might be as well to point out the law on this subject which Mr. Wedderburn did not do in his article concerning the sale of vehicles (THE LISTENER, May 15).

It is not good enough these days for the private owner to say: 'It is a lovely little runner; you will have no trouble with it. I'm only selling because my new one is ready'. Since Section 7 of the Road Traffic Act, 1956, amended Section 8 of the Road Traffic Act, 1934, the seller must make absolutely sure that the brakes, tyres, and steering are in a good condition. Failure to do so makes him liable to quite heavy penalties.

He has only one defence to this. He cannot be convicted if he can prove that he had reasonable cause to believe that the vehicle would not to be used on a road in Great Britain or that it would be put into a roadworthy condition before such use.

Consider how easy it is to break the law. I sell a car and I point out to my customer that the hand brake is inefficient. If he drives away with my good wishes as soon as the sale is complete, then I have committed an offence.—Yours, etc.,

High Wycombe

A. HAILSTONE

## The 'Disappointed Man'

Sir,—Mr. Michael Blackmore refers to Barbellion's *Journal of a Disappointed Man* as if it were in truth a diary. It is strange that he should apparently be unaware of the very damaging criticisms which Professor A. F. Pollard levied against its authenticity as a diary as long ago as 1921. These criticisms evoked a curious reply from Barbellion's brother, to which Pollard answered that 'Barbellion's apologists have established the fact that his diaries, as published, are not diaries at all, but consist of imaginative introspections and retrospections constructed and reconstructed with a keen eye to artistic effect, but with no regard to historical truth'. The controversy may be found in *History*, vol. vi, pp. 23, 183.—Yours, etc.,

Oxford

R. F. V. HEUSTON

## The Unknown Debussy

Sir,—I would like, if I may, to make one or two comments on Mr. Lockspeiser's letter which you published last week accusing me of certain inaccuracies in my talk on 'The Unknown Debussy' (THE LISTENER, May 8).

I will deal first with his first point—the libretto Debussy was preparing for 'The Fall of the House of Usher'. Mr. Lockspeiser finds fault with me for saying 'it is clear that Debussy intended to make his own (libretto) . . .' but, taking into account the date of the letter to Caplet to which I had just referred (1909), this statement is perfectly correct, as we have it on the authority of his publisher, Jacques Durand (in a footnote to a letter to him from the composer referring to 'The House of Usher' dated June 18, 1908) that the libretto was not in fact completed until 1917.

As regards the music for this opera, I have yet to learn that anything more than 'fragments' exist. Léon Vallas (Debussy's principal biographer) indeed goes so far as to assert that '*nulle musique n'est restée des trois projets*' ('Tristan', 'House of Usher' and 'The Devil in the Belfry') (see *Achille-Claude Debussy*, Paris, 1949). Moreover D. E. Inghelbrecht in his *Claude Debussy* (Paris 1953) also states: '*on n'a rien trouvé de ces opéras*', while the house of Durand has always maintained, rightly or wrongly, that it knows of no sketches or fragments for these works.

In spite of these assertions, however, we now know that a few pages from 'The House of Usher' have survived in private collections and have been brought to light recently by Mr. Lockspeiser himself; but even he has never claimed, so far as I am aware, that these are more than fragments. I therefore fail to see

why, as Mr. Lockspeiser puts it, 'it is completely erroneous' to state that Debussy was prevented from writing more than a few fragments, even if I do go on to suggest that this was due to his 'inhibitions'. I still think it was; in any case this can only be a matter of opinion.

With regard to my version of the remark made by Debussy to the manager of the Metropolitan Opera that 'not one note had yet been written', I agree that the actual words were: 'I have written only some vague ideas'. He did, however, say to Gatti-Casazza: 'Remember you are the one who insisted on making this agreement and that probably you will not receive anything'.

I come now to the last paragraph of Mr. Lockspeiser's letter. The phrase '*le délicieux mal de choisir entre toutes*' which I quoted should have been '*le délicieux mal de l'idée de choisir entre toutes*'—a slip which I regret. Mr. Lockspeiser thinks I have 'gone even further astray' in my interpretation of this admittedly ambiguous expression and am wrong in assuming that it meant that Debussy could not decide 'what he was or was not to write'. I am sorry if I did not make myself clear, but this was not quite what I had in mind. His problem, as I see it, was not so much 'what' he was to write as 'how'; in other words he was uncertain of being able to find the right language or style in which to portray the sufferings of Usher. He felt, in fact, that what had been right for 'Pelléas' would be wrong for Roderick Usher, and that he would have to find a new approach. Mr. Lockspeiser himself, commenting (in his edition of the Caplet letters) on the expression used by Debussy quite rightly sees a parallel between 'his hesitation before the unlimited choice of means open to him and the anguish felt by Stravinsky (described in his *Poetics of Music*) in the act of composition: and finding myself before the infinitude of possibilities that present themselves . . .' And that is exactly what I meant when I said 'Debussy could never bring himself to make the choice'.

With regard to Mr. Lockspeiser's final rebuke accusing me of the 'incorrect assertion' that Baudelaire was Debussy's favourite poet, I can only say that my source for this assertion is none other than Debussy himself, and it can be found in a document which possibly Mr. Lockspeiser has never seen or heard of. It is true the date was 1889, but in that year, at any rate, Debussy, when invited by a young lady to fill in a sort of questionnaire, such as used to be popular in drawing-rooms half a century ago, wrote under the heading 'Favourite Poet'—Baudelaire.

Yours, etc.,

Bramley

ROLLO MYERS

## Coventry: Test-case of Planning

Sir,—Mr. Oates (in his letter printed in THE LISTENER of May 8) gives away his case when he admits that the problem of city centres has nowhere been properly solved in the modern world. Nor will it be, so long as architects are as confused and discursive as Mr. Johnson-Marshall (THE LISTENER, April 17) showed himself, and so long as they assume, with Mr. Oates, that there is a 'twentieth-century way' of going about our shopping or recreation. Of course, when we are not screaming in jets or roaring on Autobahnen, our locomotion, like our human nature, stays much the same. We can still only enjoy buildings or herbaceous borders properly if we stop to look at them.

Modern architects seldom ask themselves, that I can see, how much or how little of our human nature, especially in our more civilised moments, has changed at all. Because some gadgets have recently appeared, they too arrogantly assume that we are new beings on this earth, and have nothing to learn from Edwardian Leeds or Imperial Rome. How unlike many engineers I know, who are glad to belong to the Georgians Group! This modernistic cliquishness is perhaps one reason why architects fail to communicate with an educated public.

What reasons of site had one for changing the east-and-west orientation, which had obtained at St. Michael's, as in almost



## BARBARA KELLY ASKS FOR HELP

'I'm asking you to help in the fight against cruelty to children', says Barbara Kelly. 'The other day the N.S.P.C.C. told me of a recent case which really shocked me. We have all heard people talking about cruelty to children—but it isn't until we read the actual details that we realise what we are up against'.

'A 24-year-old labourer was convicted of assaulting his two-year-old daughter. He brought the child down from bed and smacked her across the mouth with the back of his hand, cutting her lip. Then he took her over to a chair, saying "I will make you respect me". He pushed her, so that she fell, and kicked her as she lay on the floor. About a month before, the mother returned home and found blood on the baby's pillow. There were scratches on her head and bruises on her ear and legs. The father was prosecuted by the N.S.P.C.C. and gaoled for two months'.

This little girl is only one of thousands of children who need your help. There are two ways in which you can assist the N.S.P.C.C. in its valuable work. The first is by reporting any cases of cruelty or neglect that come to your notice. The second is to



follow Barbara Kelly's example and enrol yourself now as a member of the N.S.P.C.C. A donation of five shillings or more secures membership. Just send the money to Barbara Kelly, N.S.P.C.C., 65 Victory House, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2, and she will acknowledge it personally.

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## TURN BACK THE CLOCK

by PODALIRIUS

Sympathy should be extended to those actors and actresses of mature years whose old films are to be seen at the turn of a T.V. knob. The temptation to watch themselves must be irresistible, and the actual watching infinitely depressing. It is not their outdated evening ties and collars that depress, nor their outdated hair-styles, and pert knee-length cocktail gowns; it is the outdated faces, the straight young noses and smooth, fair brows, firm young chins and bright young eyes. To see oneself in close-up, 20 years ago, is to keep away from a looking-glass for a week.

For the rest of us, the painful experience doesn't arise—or only in an infinitely lesser degree, represented by the snapshots of long-forgotten holidays, or the occasional "cabinet" portrait. Even then, the thing is at least not animated, not pouring speeches of love from its smirking lips, or taking some heroic stand with its straight young back to the wall. We see our old photographs as an identity dead and gone; the face in our shaving-glass or powder compact is the continuing and eternal US. The lines grow and the hair recedes with such merciful gradualness that day-to-day inspections show nothing of time's inroads; we are, on the whole, pleased with the way we are wearing, and continually surprised to learn that Mrs. This or Mr. That, whom we have almost regarded as the previous generation, are only our own age after all. They have not, we conclude, looked after themselves.

But the film actor—if he is unlucky enough to be disengaged in the evenings—can no longer deceive himself in these matters. And not only his personal but his professional feelings are wounded as he watches one of Sir Alexander Korda's ancient triumphs. He is still playing juveniles at the age of fifty, perhaps, and has been congratulating himself on keeping the years at bay. But now, as he sees himself playing juveniles at the age of twenty-five, his hand strays up to trace his hairline, to touch what until this moment he has declined to recognise as a jowl. Disillusion sweeps over him. He knows, at last, that he is as mortal as a bus-driver, a bank cashier, as any man lucky enough to escape having his youth preserved in celluloid. In fact, his only consolation is that the actor he has just shared his big scene with . . . twenty-five years ago . . . has long passed on into timeless realms. That at any rate, he feels, can never happen to him.

\* \* \* \*

At heart, Podalirius, the actor and the bus-driver are probably much the same. Each does his job as best he can. And in a similar manner each stands up to the ravages of time—with or without goading reminders preserved in celluloid. No one can do more. But everybody can be sure of being nutritionally fortified against such inevitable onslaughts, even though the present-day diet often lacks vital nutrients. How? Simply by sprinkling Bemax on our food each day. For Bemax is stabilised wheat germ—the richest natural vitamin-protein-mineral supplement known to man. Bemax is available from chemists.

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every Christian church? (Exceptions, such as Rievaulx and St. George's, Bloomsbury, are rare indeed!) The truth is that the 'replanners' of Coventry got themselves into a tangle, and offered the competitors for the new cathedral a problem which permitted no Christian solution.

As for shopping precincts and service-roads, why did Mr. Johnson-Marshall give no inkling of the way these worked, and of the total area in the centre of the town thus closed to most of the traffic? Surely he was needlessly uncommunicative. In so far as modern historians, poets and philosophers also 'romp in some pretty exotic byways', they do not exculpate Mr. Johnston-Marshall, but inculpate themselves.

Mr. Oates seems to exaggerate the number and difficulty of the intersections between the streets of Leeds and its Edwardian arcades. Has he ever seen them? The centre of Leeds is admirably planned. We owe it, in its main lines, to the humble but reasonable builders of the eighteenth century.—Yours, etc.

Cambridge

HUGH PLOMMER

### London's Changing Skyline

Sir,—After having read Mr. Berry's letter (THE LISTENER, May 15) I realise the force of what he says. I withdraw the sentence to which he takes exception. I was thinking far more of architects in the past than of contemporary ones, and of the extraordinary diversity of structures with which they contrived to fill some of London's streets. Why is it, I wonder, that one often sees a street in a country town in which buildings of many diverse periods seem to combine perfectly, while in London such happy combinations are so much rarer?

The main subject of my letter was the objections to building high buildings in streets designed for low ones, which are by no means purely aesthetic. Light and air are excluded, traffic and noise increase, the air fills with dust and fumes, living and working conditions suffer. This is not the fault of the architect; but it can be prevented by regulations limiting height in the interests of health. I think it would have been a good thing if such limitations had been more strictly applied in the past; and that the remedy for over-crowding is to 'hive off' the surplus population to healthier conditions outside the Green Belt, rather than to go on building higher and higher buildings at the centre.

Unfortunately, this is easier said than done, for the whole situation is immensely complicated and difficult. But the New Towns are built and the movement towards them is well under way; so there is good hope for the future. I think many architects would agree with me about this, and share my hope that the skyline will not rise much higher.—Yours, etc.,

Hertingfordbury

H. W. RICHMOND

### 'Rotha on the Film'

Sir,—The review of my book (THE LISTENER, May 15) firmly implies that I believe the art of the film was lost when the silent cinema died in the late 'twenties. The following quotes from the foreword show how mistaken your reviewer is:

In all . . . it is an inspiring picture of cinema as a whole that faces us today. . . . In a year that has brought to England such remarkable feature films as [and fourteen titles are listed] we have no cause to complain of the lack of virility or progress in world cinema.

If your reviewer believes his own generalisation: 'All . . . that is required of a film star today is that she shall give a stage performance . . .', then he is surely unaware of the work of Simone Signoret, Anna Magnani, Ellie Lambetti, and Melina Mercouri.—Yours, etc.,

London, E.C.4

PAUL ROTH

### 'In the Land of the Musk-Ox'

Sir,—Your reviewer of *In the Land of the Musk-Ox* (THE LISTENER, May 8) states that north-east Greenland was once inhabited by a considerable Norse population. The Norse settlements were precisely at the opposite coast of Greenland—the south-west. The nearest of these was over 1,000 miles as the crow flies from the musk-ox country.

The settlements were at the head of the long fjords, where there is lush grass to this day, and excellent facility for cattle-rearing, though the early frosts always came too soon for corn to ripen. There was, however, until the fifteenth century, a flourishing trade with Norway, the most valuable exports being furs, skins, and walrus ivory. Rune stones have shown that Norse hunting parties did journey far north on the west coast, but it is doubtful whether the east coast of Greenland was ever visited at this period.

The Norse colonies disappeared round about 1500, and for over 200 years the west coast was occupied only by Eskimo hunters.—Yours, etc.,

Coventry

J. F. WEST

### Cant

Sir,—Misquotation unites strange bedfellows. Reviewing *The Advocate's Devil* (THE LISTENER, May 15) one of your contributors wrote of a recommendation of Lenin to 'clear our minds of cant'. If the great Marxist ever made any such recommendation, he was merely slightly misquoting the great Tory, who, on May 15, 1783, said to Boswell: 'My dear friend, clear your mind of cant'.—Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.2

CHARLES R. WILLIAMS

## Preventive Medicine and the New Plagues

(continued from page 839)

risks while others are poor risk-takers. What sort of children are these accident children, and from what sort of families do they come? Finding human or family patterns in this sort of inquiry is likely to be difficult because the other factors involved in a road accident—driver, road surface, condition of car, and so on—may all be as important as the behaviour of the child who is knocked down. So this is the sort of inquiry where if we are to get results that mean anything, we must compare the accident children and their families with a matched control group: matched, of course, in every way but the one we want to look at. Often, after a long and painstaking study, all that happens is that you prove the obvious: but even this, in a subject with so few facts and so many fancies, is worth while.

Let me give some examples. From this sort of study we have learned that the intelligence of the child seems to have little to do with accidents. Then there is the all-important question of mother: her health and her preoccupation—with work or some other distraction—are accurately reflected in accidents to her children; in fact, any sort of family illness seems to render the growing child more vulnerable. Then there is crowding. Children, especially young children, living in overcrowded con-

ditions, are much more vulnerable than others (even if both groups play in the streets). Children from poorer homes are also more liable to road accidents (and this is not only due to the fact that poorer homes have fewer motor-cars). As one might expect, badly housed children are also more likely to suffer road accidents than those who are well housed; and so on. In this way we can build up a picture of the vulnerable family and, perhaps, in the long run focus educational and other preventive measures on those most in need.

These two very different examples—coronary disease of the heart and road accidents to children—will show something of the type of research of the preventive medicine men. The method of approach is much the same for the other new plagues: peptic ulcer, the effects of radiation, bronchitis, and so on. The step between understanding a disease, being able to prevent it and actually preventing it, is of course the greatest challenge of all. Here the family doctor and the public health services must join the team; it is high time the three of us got together even more often than we do, for without this sort of collaboration the new plagues might well become as serious as the old.

—Network Three



# NEWS DIARY

May 14-20

## Wednesday, May 14

European rioters in Algiers seize French Government headquarters. 'Committee of Public Safety' formed under General Massu, French parachute commander

New French Government under M. Pierre Pflimlin, after being voted into power by National Assembly, charges General Salan, Commander-in-Chief in Algeria, with maintaining law and order there

National Coal Board had deficit of over £5,000,000 in 1957

## Thursday, May 15

General de Gaulle announces that he is ready to 'assume the powers of the Republic'

All three railway unions accept increase in wages offered by British Transport Commission

Russians launch a third satellite weighing over a ton

Dr. Vivian Fuchs, leader of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, is invested by the Queen with the insignia of the Order of Knighthood

## Friday, May 16

French National Assembly grants M. Pflimlin emergency powers

In Algiers M. Delbecque, a leading member of the 'Committee of Public Safety', appeals to General de Gaulle to assume the leadership of France

## Saturday, May 17

M. Jacques Soustelle, former Governor-General of Algeria and supporter of General de Gaulle, arrives in Algiers from Paris

In the Lebanon many Syrians suspected of trouble-making are arrested

## Sunday, May 18

Further riots take place in Lebanese port of Tripoli

French Government announces mobilisation of gendarmerie reserves

Belgian airliner crashes at Casablanca: sixty-five people killed

## Monday, May 19

General de Gaulle holds press conference in Paris

Lebanese Government claims control of two-thirds of the port of Tripoli.

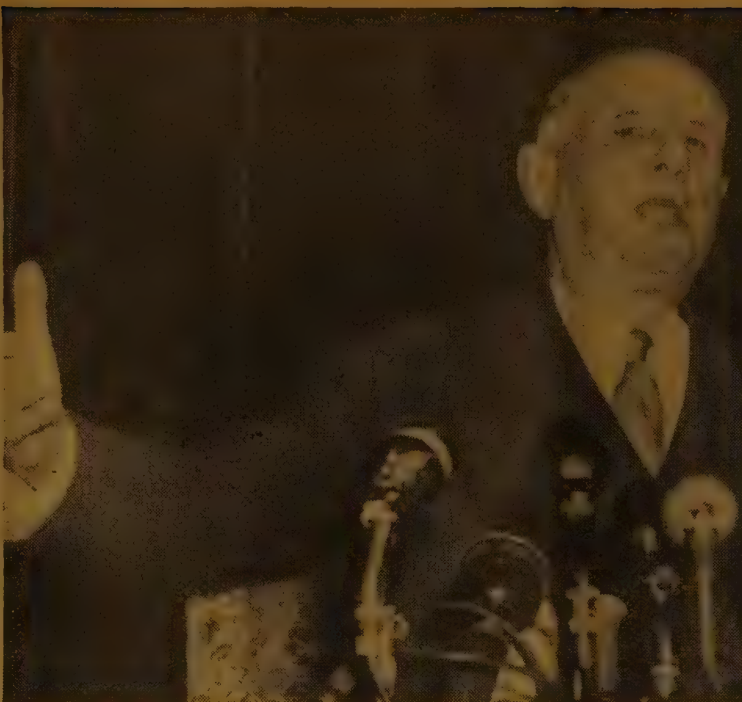
Peter May to captain England in Test matches against New Zealand

## Tuesday, May 20

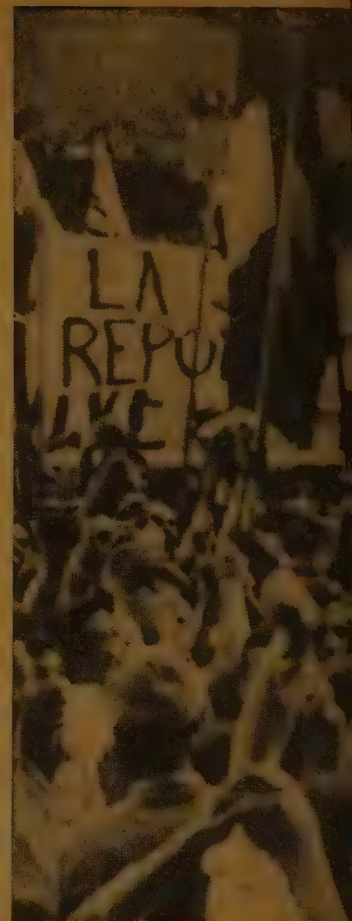
The French Cabinet announces measures to safeguard financial position and National Assembly debates renewal of emergency powers in Algeria

London underground railway workers accept offer of three per cent. wage increase

Minister of Agriculture tells Commons of measures to stop 'dumping' of butter



General Charles de Gaulle speaking at the press conference he gave in Paris on May 19, when he reiterated his offer, made last week following events in Algeria, to assume the leadership of France. He emphasised, however, that a return to power would be only by legal means

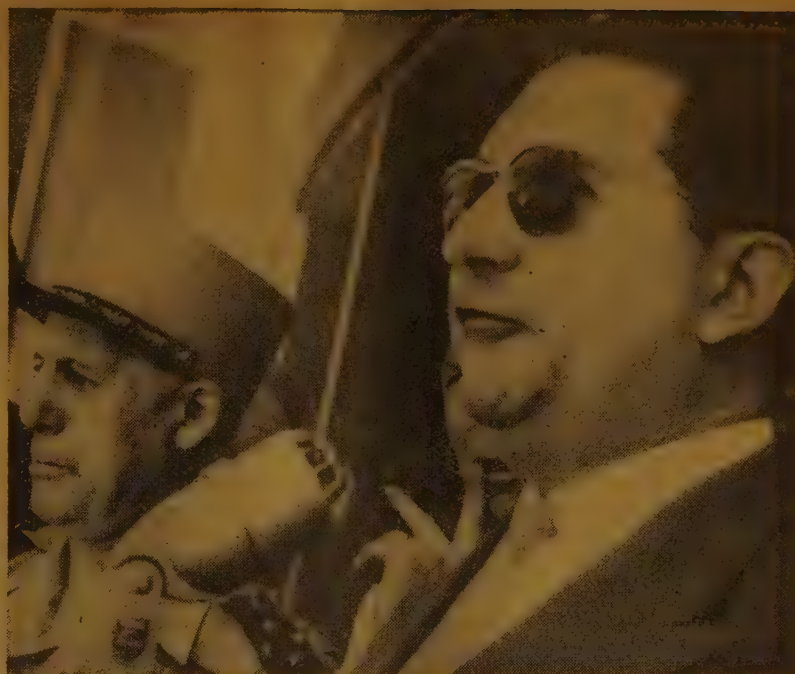


Right: Moslems from the Casbah joining with French civilians in a rally outside Government House in Algiers on May 16 to hear an address by General Massu, leader of the newly formed 'Committee of Public Safety'



President Giovanni Gronchi of Italy replying to the Lord Mayor of London at Guildhall on May 14 when he and Signora Gronchi (right) attended the City of London's traditional ceremony of welcome during their State visit last week





M. Jacques Soustelle (right), a former Governor-General of Algeria and one of General de Gaulle's chief supporters, speaking from the balcony of Government House, Algiers, on May 18 after his arrival by air. With him is General Salan, the present Commander-in-Chief in Algeria



from the Moscow Art Theatre Company's production of 'The Cherry Orchard' which they opened a season of plays by Chekhov at Sadler's Wells Theatre last week. (right) Charlotta Ivanovna (Angelina Stepanova), Madame Ranevskaya (Alla Firce (Alexis Gribov), Gaieff (Pavel Massalsky), and Varya (Tatyana Lennikova)



An exhibit at this year's Chelsea Flower Show (open to the public May 21-23): a miniature Dutch nursery



A blackbird rearing her family on the carrier of an old bicycle in a shed at the London Zoo



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## Summer Books

## Gainsborough at Full Length

Gainsborough. By Ellis Waterhouse. Hulton Press. £6. 16s. 6d.

Reviewed by LAWRENCE GOWING

NOT many English painters make us think about style first and foremost. We attend rather to their subjects—to character, manners, landscape, and light: we may even be reminded of stylistic contrivance and the Grand Manner, which is still not quite the same thing. To attract support easily in England painting needs some definite comprehensible import and a purpose that we can put a name to. English style is normally functional rather than autonomous, as European styles are apt to be, none more so than the Rococo, the most inveterately stylish of them all.

Gainsborough shows, from first to last, 'the touch of the pencil' as an involuntary and necessary function of man's nature. His brush acted simply upon the impulse of a marvellously lively temperament. Nothing could dictate to it or interfere with it; the grand philosophic prescriptions for art never tempted him. Alone of painters of any consequence he would not strengthen his manner for exhibition. 'You know', he wrote to the Academy, shortly before dispensing with it altogether, 'my cunning way of avoiding great subjects' (and owing to the studies of which this book is the culmination we do know it). His brush never moved but with the natural movement of an impulsive, sensitive, sociable spirit.

This is not the characteristic constitution of English painters. Gainsborough grew up at a time when English art was nearer to France than ever before or since, in a circle which encouraged just this frame of mind. The manner of Watteau's school which the circle of Gravelot and Hayman imported, distilled its elegance from a natural, feeling style that has never bred on English soil. When Hayman (a notably unfettered character) followed the French cue by setting English figures in English landscape (in a manner by French standards prosaic and ham-fisted) he revealed naturally a relationship between them which was a considerable discovery. Gainsborough's early portraits oscillate between the two principles, a Rococo stylishness with landscape like an elegant backcloth and the new, natural presentation in which people were exactly balanced against the real scene. At about the time when the picture which established this characteristic balance most perfectly, the portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews beside their acres, was painted, Hayman was designing just such a landscape, with figures similarly balanced against the English view. Hayman's design has a philosophical theme (almost anticipating Rousseau); it illustrates a poetic essay in support of 'the great Principle . . . the genuine light of uncorrupted and unperverted Nature'. Gainsborough detested reading and would have nothing of pro-

grammes, but Hayman's invention (which may have been his source) reveals well enough the associations of such a design in 1750.

Gainsborough's mature attitude to landscape had (as Professor Waterhouse puts it) 'nothing in it of the inspired and direct meditation on the natural scene which we have come to expect'. In Suffolk at the outset, in one of his moods, only the ultimate directness of nineteenth-century *plein-airisme* seems lacking, but it was as much the other mood, leading him to the elaborate and stylish reconstruction of a natural Arcadia, that governed his later method. The portraits that he painted when he moved to Bath were at first startlingly direct. Not only fashionable taste but, perhaps as much, the painter's own requirements led to the progressive substitution of a refinement and elegance extracted from Van Dyck, but none the less original. Gainsborough was in search of 'the sort of human beings who are worthy of Gainsborough's trees': Professor Waterhouse's book is full of things as good as this. It is the finished full-length for which he has previously given us the dazzling *ébauches*.

Gainsborough's style, the movement of the pencil and the flow of

form which were his ruling passion, required a special order of subjects. It needed for full development a consistent world persuaded into unresisting agreement with it. In landscape the best solution, leading to a height of formal and natural grandeur (a point from which Constable could almost take over), was provided by the source of so many solutions, the source indeed of Rococo painting, the homogeneous world of Rubens. But 'The Market Cart' was still on Gainsborough's hands when he died. In the more fashionable Vernet line, Gainsborough achieved an extreme of atmospheric originality, and made room not only for Morland but for Turner. But it did not serve him for long. The final step in the evolution of inhabitants worthy of his landscape was (aided by Murillo) the fancy pictures, and at last the interests of the style and the patron were both well served. Only the sense of natural material was a little cheated.

A cunning way indeed was required of a great artist who achieved the personal conclusion of his style without landing in the poor-house. The concluding phase of Gainsborough's portraiture, the phase in which face-painting dissolved into an original pictorial unity and portraits became eccentric and romantic vehicles for profoundly considered ideas, is better valued by Professor Waterhouse than ever before. Very few books in the whole English literature of art combine the most scrupulous history with criticism as good as this.



Above: Gainsborough's 'Mr. and Mrs. Andrews', painted after 1748. Below: Hayman's illustration to *Poetic Essays* . . . to Dr. Askew, published in 1750





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## Human Folly

### The Mist Procession

By Lord Vansittart. Hutchinson. 35s.

THE LATE LORD VANSITTART was a distinguished public servant and for the most crucial period between the two world wars was head of the Foreign Office. He was also a considerable poet and wrote some successful plays. I looked forward with much interest to reading his reminiscences. He was a strong character and had taken his own line to the detriment of his career, playing for many years the ungrateful role of Cassandra.

This volume, written leisurely during the last five years of his life and brought to an end prematurely by his death when he had carried his story to the year 1937, proved, however, a sad disappointment. Its theme is human folly. Shakespeare said it in six words: 'Lord, what fools these mortals be'. Lord Vansittart takes 550 pages with damnable iteration. He sees an endless procession of men and women passing along a road in the mist from one obscurity to another. He passes judgement upon them, but it is not possible to see how far his illumination of events is due to his knowledge of events at the time or to the hindsight of an old man.

Born and educated in the certitudes of the Victorian era in a typical Kentish squire's home, Vansittart was early destined for the Foreign Service and, while still at school, spent his vacations in France and Germany, falling in love with the former and acquiring a deep distrust of the latter. His visits coincided with a period of intense unpopularity of Great Britain. In France there was the incident of Fashoda to upset the French. In Germany there was the frustration at the inability of the Kaiser to intervene except by a telegram in the Boer war. These experiences coloured Vansittart's outlook, though pity for France's plight at the time of the Dreyfus case outweighed any unkindness; but dislike of the attitude of the Germans grew stronger through the years.

The story progresses with interesting passages descriptive of the life of a young diplomat, and sketches of leading personalities; but he also gives us a view of public events. He writes in a sarcastic and epigrammatic style which would be enjoyable in a chapter or in a short article, but pursued page after page becomes boring. Caviare once in a while is very well, but served up as the main dish at every meal it palls.

Our author treats of the first world war in this style for sixty pages. He was himself doing a minor job in connection with blockade in Sweden and had no particular knowledge of events, but he gives somewhat superficial views on matters of strategy and waxes sarcastic at the expense of those who had to deal with things as they were or appeared to be at the time. With the peace conferences he moves into the centre of things and deals faithfully with all the participants. It seems as if in his view there was never any hope of the Germans turning over a new leaf. He does not agree with those who thought that if the Weimar Republic had been given a chance it might have created a better Germany, and appears to approve what seemed to most of us the intransigence of France.

A turn of fortune brought Vansittart as private secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin. The chapters on his service in Downing Street are some of the best in the book and his picture of his chief is illuminating. In 1929 he stayed on with Mr. MacDonald, who eventually made him head of the Foreign Office. Rather surprisingly MacDonald escapes the general denigration and impressed Vansittart more than he did most people, but since Vansittart seems to have preferred J. H. Thomas to Arthur Henderson one is inclined to doubt his judgement of persons. The rest of the book is mainly taken up with his long and fruitless attempts to induce the Coalition Government to wake up to the reality of the German menace. His advice was always disregarded and he was eventually put into cold storage as an adviser on foreign policy instead of head of the department. At this point the story ends.

Vansittart's view was, I think, limited by his contacts. He never seems to have grasped the revulsion of people to war after the slaughter of the 1914 war. He was apt to lump together pacifists

and supporters of the League of Nations. He seems to think that the Labour Party men were all pacifists whereas they realistically understood that mere national defence was out-dated and that the only hope was in collective security, a view now generally accepted. He was indeed rather out of touch with the opinions of the masses. Nationalists on the Continent and socialists at home were to him just fools. He did not understand how strongly they held their beliefs. He takes a wholly superficial view of the inter-war period, regarding the nation as given up to frivolity and selfish hedonism.

It was unfortunate for Vansittart that he had in his riper years to serve a Government in which the leading figures were MacDonald, Baldwin, Simon, and Neville Chamberlain, a combination ill-fitted to deal with the conditions they had to meet. The book is adorned with many extracts from Lord Vansittart's poems which seem only further variations on the theme of human folly.

While he shows no inclination to admire dictatorships, he takes a poor view of democratic institutions and of the leaders who emerge from popular choice. Given his general outlook the same strictures might have been passed had he lived at any time in history. Nevertheless the human race has survived. It may even survive the discovery of nuclear weapons. In Vansittart's view we are all Gadarene swine, but the steep place seems fairly lengthy.

ATTLEE

## Men in Orders

### The County Clergy in Elizabethan and Stuart Times

By A. Tindal Hart. Phoenix House. 21s.

HISTORICAL STUDIES of social groups tend to be either exhaustive, dull and valuable, or superficial, quite readable and not particularly important. Few tasks are harder than the reconstruction of a whole body of men, in all their variety, from such scattered examples as may be found. The material will not accommodate itself to the obvious guiding line of a development in time, nor has it as a rule much solidity or clarity of outline. In consequence, the historian is tempted to turn either severely sociological or rather chatty, though neither quality offers the most promising of foundations for a book. The first may be preferred, if only because it shows at least a realisation that important questions need answering; the second is more common. It has to be confessed that Mr. Hart's study of the clergy between Elizabeth's accession and Charles II's restoration belongs to this latter category.

'Chatty' is, no doubt, an unfair term to use for what is clearly the product of much reading, much note-taking, much seriousness. Yet what else can one call a book which consists of a mosaic of passages and quotations, a card-index of instances assembled with some descriptive skill but entirely without analytical investigation? Mr. Hart's last chapter—some little sketches of individual clerics, brief notes which lack only literary quality—shows his method at its worst; but in effect the whole book is so put together. There is no attempt to evaluate the evidence used. Piled citations from the massive records of the Elizabethan and early Stuart Church do not, it must be said, prove a case; and whether they constitute a picture depends after all on their value, not on their number. The clergy were often unlearned and sometimes morally deplorable: no doubt, but are we to make nothing of the fact that the specific charges used to support this familiar view come from interested parties, from angry puritans, from discontented parishioners?

In the same way, the puritan account of Star Chamber and High Commission is accepted without any critical assessment. Mr. Hart has unfortunately stopped short at the first stage of historical research—at the stage of collection. Nor has he attempted to clarify the geographical situation: examples are taken indiscriminately from all regions that offer (the north hardly appears and Wales not at all), so that a most misleading impression of a unitary 'class' of country clergy is created. The background is based on little familiarity with the age: one cannot feel very secure in the hands of one to whom 'puritanism' and



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## DENT



'Anglicanism' clearly mean precise and unchanging things, and he is a particularly unsafe guide through the reign of James I.

It is a measure of Mr. Hart's failure that his hints at something like a theme—an alleged physical and moral improvement in the clergy in this period—come as a surprise. It is not that his arguments fail to convince; rather he has failed to construct any argument at all. There are some distressing absences from an otherwise impressive bibliography; especially one misses Mr. Hill's *Economic Problems of the Church*, dead on the period.

Perhaps these criticisms simply mean that expectations had been pitched too high. There is value in a book which introduces the reader to many interesting stories and some good prose, even if it leaves the serious questions unasked. It is an honest book, without airs or graces, and without bias. Mr. Hart's diligence has unearthed many delightful examples of the fighting parson, the drinking parson, the swearing parson, as well as of the honest, upright and godly minister of the Word. In doing this he has relied a good deal on old Thomas Fuller (on whom he has some pleasing things to say), and if he has done no more than bring new readers to that happy spring he has done well enough. Unfortunately his own style lacks the life that bubbles up in his sources. It is also sad to find a Cambridge man permitting the names of two Cambridge colleges and one Cambridge church to be misspelt, all within two lines.

G. R. ELTON

## Rome's Greatest Historian

Tacitus. By Ronald Syme. Oxford. 2 vols. £4. 4s.

TACITUS APPEALS TO OUR AGE. We can understand only too well the sombre outlook, the dark landscape, the disillusionment, and the deep anger against the tyranny of the emperors and its calamitous effects not only on the emperors themselves but also on their victims. We cannot fail to appreciate the penetrating insight into men and the grim motives which make them act, the intensely vivid descriptions, the creation of atmosphere, and the style of genius. Much has been written about him in recent years, but only Professor Syme has produced a book worthy of his majestic subject.

First and last, the theme of Cornelius Tacitus in *Historiae* and *Annales* is not merely the story of ten emperors from the death of Caesar Augustus to the assassination of Domitian. It is the struggle between the imperial power and the Roman Senate. Oligarchy is the enduring fact of all Roman history, whether Republican or imperial, and constant in most things, save in its composition. The recruitment of that oligarchy, its titles to rank, its behaviour and its vicissitudes, such is the constant preoccupation of the historian Tacitus.

Tacitus was a senator and a consul, familiar with politics and government, and he played a distinguished part in the public life of the late first and the early second century A.D. Syme presents him in his social and political context. His relations with the oligarchy, the various groupings which made up the oligarchy, the changes in their composition, the rise of some and the fall of others, the ideals which they shared, are described and analysed in this book with an astonishing wealth of detail; and the picture of Imperial Roman political life which emerges is far more vivid and satisfying than anything we have had hitherto.

But above all Tacitus was a writer of genius; and the fact that he became one of the oligarchy and that he entered into the senatorial tradition is of capital importance for the understanding of his work. Although Syme is too brief on the *Agricola* and perhaps too harsh towards the *Germania*, he is brilliant on the *Historiae* and the *Annals*. All the familiar literary questions are raised again in these two volumes. The sources of information which Tacitus used, the use he made of them, his abilities as a military historian, his literary debt to Sallust and others of his predecessors, his relations with Pliny and with the Emperors Domitian, Trajan, and Hadrian, his rhetorical training, his technique and style—all these and a multitude of other matters are discussed again, and the discussion is always fresh and new, lively

and instructive. There is much here to be learnt not only by the political historian but also by the literary critic, the Latinist, and even the textual critic. The ninety-five appendixes on history, literature, and the Latin language contribute much to almost every branch of Latin studies.

In spite of the colossal quantity of detail which Syme handles, he is always readable. His style, perhaps somewhat mannered, is rapid and Tacitean. 'The prose', as he says of Sallust, 'grows tighter and fiercer—short sentences and abrupt endings, speed and variety'. His monumental book is one of which British scholarship may be proud.

E. A. THOMPSON

## Life is Good

Letters of John Cowper Powys to Louis Wilkinson, 1935-1956. Macdonald. 30s.

THESE LETTERS COULD have been written only by the author of *Wolf Solent*, *A Glastonbury Romance*, *Obstinate Cymric*, and a most memorable *Autobiography* (to make a choice among his romances and philosophies), a writer who more than once protests his simplicity: 'the rapidity of my movements gives a false impression of subtlety. I am not subtle. I am an *Acrobat* as well as a *Medium*'. It would not be easy to guess this man's age. More difficult still to realise he lost the sight of his right eye twelve years ago, and keeps himself alive on the diet of an anchorite—a little dry bread, sweet tea, milk. What a deal of rumbustious gaiety and roguery, kindness and wisdom, for such modest fare. The quality, never abated, that seizes the attention at once is an exuberant and unquenchable vitality, an enormous enjoyment in observing, describing, and dissecting the human situation. This gusto in living never loses its fierce alertness, and the courage behind it seems untroubled by pessimism or despair. In some ways this makes for monotony; more variation in pitch and note would be welcome.

The name 'Powys' is both a promise and a challenge. The members of this remarkable family, now sadly reduced in number, are most at home in letters when writing about themselves or one another. There are also pockets of particular affection, shared by two or three members (depending largely on age) within the family, and beyond those a powerful loyalty to each other no matter how much they differ in temperament and opinion. The more one is familiar with their multifarious achievements, affections and vagaries, the richer the reward of such a book as this. One should be able to savour what the phrase 'barbarous naïveté' means when applied to them and why they are magnanimous but not considerate.

In any case a book of letters, when writer and recipient are still alive, must to some extent remain private, especially when annotation has been reduced to the barest minimum and the other side of the correspondence is not given. Omissions are roughly marked, but we have no means of knowing how much has been left out. The editor, Louis Wilkinson (Louis Marlow), one of the family's greatest friends, wrote in *Welsh Ambassadors* (1936) the best introduction to their diverse natures. The long chapter there on John Cowper, with extracts from his letters between 1906 and 1911, is an essential preliminary to this book. Where are the letters from 1912 to 1934?

The letter is a form almost too kind to his extempore style and startling egoism, for he never reads again what he has written. His appetite for words and delight in pursuing them reveal the disciple of Rabelais and Sir Thomas Urquhart. Both correspondents have a hatred of cant, distrust of superior persons, and a disposition to ribaldry. No subject is taboo: one letter discourses at length on the feelings of women in the act of 'love'. No one, he proclaims, is so 'riddled, punctured, scorified and perforated' as he by Superstition. In jealousy of Llewelyn and Theodore he can behave 'like an aged virginal good-hearted but easily hurt Bar-Maid'. He recognises that Theodore, 'in humour as in the unique originality of his whole Being', comes easily first among the three of them, and that both Theodore and Llewelyn are born writers whereas he is a born orator, preacher, and story-teller.



And, above all, actor:

I am a born actor, and why? Because I have no original self in me at all. I have always 'played' at life, 'played' at religion, 'played' at philosophy. I have always loved only sensations, especially the sensation of telling oneself a story, and in the story I become any one of all the characters, male or female.

Likewise he insists that, despite laborious foundation and scaffolding for his romances, 'all (without any exception) of the talent, gift, eloquence, insight, clairvoyance I possess is always *digression*—never anything else'. The chance moment has its way with both characters and ideas.

His likes and dislikes, hates and loves are expressed with force. Politics, national and international, are not disdained. Churchill (a 'proper man') is preferred to 'Cripps and all those popular-crazed pin-headed Daily-Worker-Propagand Prof. Haldane

austeriotypes'. He detests vivisection and Donne ('his very name is like a shower of dry bits of mud thrown at me') and T. E. Lawrence, and revolts against 'this bloody Wessex'. For Mr. T. S. Eliot, with his 'exclusive, fussy, anxious white soul' he has no great regard. Henry James, 'this Colossus of Subtlety and Pure Brain and Flawless Values', is a major god. He is early in the field with praise for Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Samuel Cozzens (*Ask me Tomorrow*) and Margaret Carpenter (*Experiment Perilous*). He dotes on Simenon (but not for his detectives). There is a brilliant analysis of Somerset Maugham and another even more searching on Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock* and *The Power and the Glory*, two books that have 'fascinated, allured, infuriated and HORRIFIED me'.

The book is indexed, well-produced, and has for frontispiece a Fuseli-like portrait by Augustus John.

C. COLLEER ABBOTT

## The Child is Father to the Man?

Hitler's Youth. By Franz Jetzinger. Translated by Lawrence Wilson. Hutchinson. 16s.

Operation Sea Lion. By Ronald Wheatley. Oxford. 30s.

LIKE SO MANY CAREFUL PIECES of research, Dr. Jetzinger's offers no astounding revelations but confirms most of the presumptions that any sensible person would naturally make about the youth of Adolf Hitler. In this book we are provided with convincing evidence that Hitler was brought up in modest but comfortable lower middle-class circumstances: the father whom he portrayed in *Mein Kampf* as a tyrant, and apparently described to Hans Frank in 1930 as a drunkard, emerges as a harmless enough parent and citizen who was duly honoured with no mean obituary notice in the *Linzer Tagespost* in January 1903. Hitler's mother died nearly five years later. Between them his parents left Hitler decently provided for: his patrimony, together with the orphan's maintenance he received, gave him an income. Dr. Jetzinger shows us, equivalent to that of a junior barrister at the time. When Hitler stated 'In my seventeenth year I was already obliged to earn my living' he was, as so often, lying: as Dr. Jetzinger says, 'In reality he reached the age of twenty-two without having earned the price of a single loaf of bread'. And what made the position still more distasteful was that, in doing so, he deprived his schoolgirl sister, and thereby the impecunious half-sister who was bringing her up, of the orphan's allowance with which any normal man would at twenty-two have dispensed.

Apart from the extreme egoism of the young Adolf Hitler, Dr. Jetzinger shows us that he was unable to write a letter without making illiterate mistakes even when he was nearly twenty-five. In his last school report, drawn up when he was sixteen, he is seen to have distinguished himself only in gymnastics, while his German and mathematics were particularly bad: Dr. Jetzinger believes that what he later drew or painted as an 'artist' was invariably copied. Throughout his schooldays, it seems, he was mainly interested in being the captain of a gang of younger boys. Later the young man who lived with him in Vienna was required to listen to much fantastic planning and speechifying and to go with him to theatre and opera in the best seats. The reason for his defaulting when due for Austrian military service is not clear. What does become clear, however, is that Adolf Hitler, full of protests and indignation because his self-indulgence was limited by his only moderately lined purse, was the very prototype of the Angry Young Men who have attracted so much attention since his death: he differed from them only in his lack of interest in sex.



Hitler in 1908, aged nineteen; a portrait re-drawn and touched-up from an earlier sketch made by a fellow student

From 'Hitler's Youth'

This was the man who, following the Napoleonic example, massed his troops ready for an invasion of Britain in 1940 when he was just fifty-one, and in June 1941 invaded Russia exactly 129 years after the Emperor of the French had done so. 'It is here', as Mr. Bullock writes in his preface to Dr. Jetzinger's book, 'in the gap between the explanation and the event, that the fascination of Hitler's career remains'. Mr. Wheatley, with unrestricted access to the official German military, naval, air, and diplomatic archives held in London and Washington, has now pieced together a detailed account of Hitler's plans for Operation Sea Lion and of what became of them. Again, no sensational revelation must be looked for.

The scale of the attack which the German army chiefs originally planned was rejected by Admiral Raeder because his navy was no match for that of the British. Thereafter a smaller-scale landing was to crown the triumph of the Luftwaffe over the R.A.F. and administer the *coup de grâce* to the British. But on Sunday, September 15, 1940, the Germans lost the Battle of Britain and on Tuesday the 17th the R.A.F. successfully attacked the Channel ports, and Operation Sea Lion was postponed 'until further notice'. Thus, although it was not until early in 1942 that Hitler agreed to the cancellation of the last Sea Lion commitments, in September 1940 the British had faced Hitler with 'his first major failure'. Mr. Wheatley blames him personally for the disagreements between the German Service Chiefs, the co-ordination of whose work he preserved in his own hands. Hitler's temperament, too, was unable to deal with situations in which the lightning attack was insufficient.

Mr. Wheatley also brings out the curiously close connection between the destiny of Britain and that of Russia in July 1940, the month in which Hitler incorporated a direct assault upon Britain into his strategy and initiated preparations for an attack upon the U.S.S.R. In 1941 the invasion of Russia was consciously aimed against Britain as well, to complete her isolation.

In conclusion it should perhaps be remarked that Dr. Jetzinger is sometimes a little too petulant and sometimes a little too emphatic about conclusions which can only be conditional. Mr. Wheatley's book, on the other hand, has all the merits of an excellent research thesis with a faintly repetitive tendency to count up considerations.

ELIZABETH WISKEMANN



## This Worrying World

The American Earthquake. By Edmund Wilson.

W. H. Allen. 37s. 6d.

Man's Western Quest. By Denis de Rougemont.

Allen and Unwin. 15s.

The Question. By Henri Alleg. Calder. 10s. 6d.

FIFTY YEARS AGO, when I was young, the idea of a Problem was exhilarating. The nineteenth century had emphasised Progress. The early twentieth century, while not rejecting progress, felt itself to be more realistic if it approached progress through problems. The problems lay about like sheets torn out of Euclid, all waiting to be solved, and posed with impeccable clarity. 'Here is a completely new problem' a statesman would enthusiastically exclaim. And though people occasionally remarked that one problem often led to another, no one realised how sinister the remark was. With proper attention and adequate commercial resourcefulness all the problems would be solved and God's great Q.E.D. peal out.

This attitude was scotched rather than killed by the first world war. Our problem, we were informed, was the elimination of the Kaiser; and there he was interned, so we had solved it. War memorials arose in every village, plus tanks until the villagers destroyed them. How many memorials have gone up after the second world war? It is a sign of the distance we have travelled. Disillusion and distrust of problems began back in the 'twenties—the most clear-sighted decade of our own half century. It realised that nothing had been solved, and that so-called solutions were hydras who produced more heads than had been decapitated. It turned instead to curiosity, to pleasure, and to compassion—the shaky tripod upon which indeed any future civilisation will have to rest. Today the situation foreseen by it has occurred. Problems have disappeared, or have retreated to platforms, and worries have taken their place. Today more and more people realise that the world we are pleased to call 'ours' has passed out of our control, and that though the human race may not be destroyed, it is powerless to avert its own destruction.

The above reflections were suggested by three books that have come out this year: a book about worries in America, another about worry for Europe, and a third about worry in Algiers. The books are composed at different temperatures, but they all register global disquiet.

*The American Earthquake*, by Edmund Wilson, is described on its wrapper as 'assembled', and those who prefer books to be written rather than assembled are unlikely to read all of it. It contains nearly six hundred pages of newspaper articles, good, indifferent and different. They are grouped into The Jazz Age, The Great Depression or Earthquake of 1931-2 that terminated it, and The Dawn of the Roosevelt New Deal which promised a healthier day. To that extent the assemblage has form and has hopefulness. But Mr. Wilson, with characteristic honesty, appends a postscript of 1957 which expresses his disillusionment. The New Deal has not dawned after all, the problems have only sprouted into new ones, the sequence of the Earthquake is not resurrection but worry.

M. de Rougemont in *Man's Western Quest* examines the plight of Europe. It is a philosophic, learned, and rather misty work, suitably appearing in a World Perspectives Series and suggesting an address delivered from too lofty a pulpit over a half-filled church. His main thesis is that the West has invented the individual and the machine, whereas the East regards all inventions as aspects of the Whole. Both West and East must learn to understand themselves; then they will understand each other, and the West, having thrown away much useless lumber, will accomplish its quest. One objection to this thesis is M. de Rougemont's old-fashioned view of the East. He regards it with the eyes of the student or the tourist, with the eyes that were appropriate to Matthew Arnold a hundred years ago. The contemporary East—the agitated area that extends from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, and seethes with technicians and politicians—never gets into the church.

From the Quest to *The Question*. The book of this name, by

M. Henri Alleg, is all too painfully definite. It describes in detail the tortures inflicted on the author and on others in Algeria by the French. If it is true—and its truth is asserted by Sartre in his introduction—it brings us all a step nearer to 1984. The British reader, rightly horrified by the atrocities, must beware of self-complacency. He too may be put to the test. In this worrying world, undermined and over-arched by the nuclear terror, we are all in imminent danger of experiencing and of inflicting pain.

E. M. FORSTER

## Ideas on Trial

The Treason Cage. By Anthony Sampson.

Heinemann. 21s.

MR. SAMPSON MADE a name for himself by his successful editorship of *Drum*, the magazine for Africans. He worked with an African staff for four years and spent much time in the Johannesburg locations. In his book of the same name, published here in 1956, he gave a memorable account of his experience and at the same time a new view of South Africa—of the new South Africa in which the old pastoral life had been transformed by an industrial revolution. What came to his notice were not the primitive, the picturesque, or the patriarchal aspects of Africa but new forms of social life and political consciousness, and new kinds of Africans. His book was particularly striking as an introduction to the new African intelligentsia. It showed them to have vitality, brains, courage, and promise enough not to be content to be always passive and docile inside the limits of a society much occupied in multiplying limits. A frustrated intelligentsia, says Mr. Sampson, is 'the vital component of political agitation'.

His new book is concerned with that extra-parliamentary opposition which, by the end of 1956, appeared to the South African Government to have become important enough to justify the arrest of more than 150 persons of various races and both sexes, and their trial on charges of high treason. In the opening of the trial he sees a revelation of the dramatic emergence of a new Africa beneath the old. He explains its significance by outlining the history of the African National Congress (generally known as Congress) since it was founded in 1912, and by demonstrating that Congress is 'the main organisation on trial'. And he follows this up with a series of portraits of some of the accused—Professor Matthews, for instance, who might have been 'the Booker Washington of his continent'; Lilian Ngoyi, the 'new woman', with a strong emotional attachment to China; Peter Nthite, the cheerful urban type; that impressive man Chief Luthuli, who has said that thirty years of his life were spent 'knocking in vain, patiently, moderately, and modestly at a closed and barred door'; Ismail Meer, the distinguished Muslim lawyer; or Walter Sisulu, who 'used to insist, like many Africans, that humanity was what should distinguish Africans from their rulers'.

Mr. Sampson argues that the older leaders of the African opposition 'have staked everything on Western civilisation and ideals, and on Christian teaching: and to nearly every African the West appears to have betrayed that trust'. He believes that the immediate danger in Congress is not a leaning towards Communism but the growth of an anti-white and anti-Western nationalism or racialism. For Africans, he points out, Western civilisation and white supremacy seem identical: he believes it is still not too late to prevent this identification. It has been said that it is ideas, not persons, that are on trial in Johannesburg—the ideas, for example, that Christianity, Western democracy, and Commonwealth mean what they profess to mean. Mr. Sampson's well-informed and forward-looking book is likely to make clearer to readers in this country how deeply these ideas are linked with the destiny of the accused in Johannesburg. It helps to justify all those who have been sneered at as 'do-gooders' for supporting and enlarging the Christian Action fund for the defence of the accused and for aid to them and their families. It is reasonable, and it is urgently necessary, to show that Western civilisation and white supremacy are not two names for one thing.

WILLIAM PLOMER





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## Victorian Colosseum

The Royal Albert Hall. By Ronald W. Clark.  
Hamish Hamilton. 25s.

'IT LOOKS LIKE the British Constitution', remarked Queen Victoria, for want of anything better to say, when she visited the Albert Hall in December 1870, shortly before opening it in the early spring of the following year amid a storm of cheering, fanfares from the Life Guards and salvoes from the Royal Horse Artillery stationed outside in the Park. To Augustus Hare it appeared 'the finest building in Europe since the Pantheon'.

In reality, it is a Victorian version of the Colosseum roofed over and certainly more Teutonic than Roman in feeling. The grandmotherly look of the whole thing is due not so much to its squat rotundity as to the use of purple brick and terra-cotta—not that the seventeen-foot-high mosaic frieze in buff and chocolate running round the upper part of the building helps either. Yet the Victorians were justified in their pride, for the Hall is undoubtedly a triumph of engineering; it was designed by a Royal Engineer who also invented a collapsible bath which could be carried by officers and gentlemen under the arm like a book.

During the four years of its construction, Victorian heroes of labour sometimes laid as many as 60,000 bricks a day out of a total of six million. Its roof was the largest that had ever been sprung without internal supports and the steam heating was pumped through five miles of piping and re-heated at more than one point on its journey. For ventilation, millions of cubic feet of air per hour could be pumped up the hollow centres of the piers in the inner hall. But as Lord Derby had written to the Queen when the first designs were submitted, there was some doubt whether a building of such size 'would be adapted to the legitimate objects of its erection, the promotion of Science and Art. It was thought by many that . . . there would be a great danger of its degenerating into a mere place of public amusements of which monster concerts would be the least objectionable; and that unless it did so degenerate it would not have a financial success'. The subsequent history of the Hall, which Mr. Ronald Clark has so ably and amusingly retold, shows that Lord Derby's fears have been only too well justified. In fact, *The Engineer* roundly declared: 'The design is wrong for anything except gladiatorial combat'.

Nothing, of course, could have been further from the Prince Consort's conception. It is true that the first rough sketches were produced by Henry Cole after a visit to the Roman amphitheatres at Arles and Nîmes in the summer of 1858. These were then adapted by Captain Fowke, till he died of heart-failure at his desk and Captain Scott took his place. The actual building was done by Lucas Bros. who had already, at Liverpool Street Station and Royal Albert Docks, shown what they were capable of in the bold and imaginative use of cast iron. The Hall was the last of the projects to materialise in the great centre of arts and sciences planned by the Prince Consort for Kensington. Apart from a comparatively small government grant of £50,000, it was built by public subscription, from funds raised by the sale of 'sittings and boxes' for life, or even in perpetuity. That it was built at all was due to the tenacity of Henry Cole, adroitly playing upon the Queen's attachment to the Consort's ideals. 'I have no taste', she confessed disarmingly to Cole, 'I always follow him'.

Standing as it did on the north side of the gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society, with their fountains, cascades and splendid trees, 'a Victorian cross between the splendours of Versailles and a modern municipal park', the situation of the Hall must have been delightful. But even at the opening ceremony of March 29, 1871, it was clear that someone had blundered. For as the Prince of Wales read his address, his words could be heard twice over in many parts of the building, 'a curious echo bringing a repetition of one sentence as the next was begun'. And when the Bishop of London had offered up a short prayer calling on God to sanctify human science by the grace of Heaven,

he had already stepped back to his seat when from somewhere in the region of the vast roof came the ironical repetition of his 'Amen'.

PHILIP HENDERSON

## Tragic Prince

The Road to Mayerling. Life and Death of Crown Prince  
Rudolph of Austria. By Richard Barkeley.  
Macmillan. 25s.

MR. BARKELEY HAS SET HIMSELF to interpret the life and death of the tragic Crown Prince of Austria as a political drama, and a drama on the grand scale. According to him, Rudolph was 'the most talented Prince the House of Habsburg had produced for centuries'; he saw aright the weaknesses of the monarchy, and was driven to despair by his father's refusal to remedy them in time; he was forced to desperate political intrigue the discovery of which may well (although on this point the author does not quite commit himself) have prompted his suicide; and with his death 'there died all hope for Austria as a liberal universal power'.

It is an interesting thesis, but Mr. Barkeley has pressed it further than the facts will bear. Admittedly, Rudolph was a talented young man, and when he came to man's estate, fretted, as many a Prince Hal has fretted, against his father's conduct of affairs. Like everyone else who looked at the problems of the Austrian Monarchy, he saw that they were not being 'solved', and consequently, as people in his position usually do, took up with the opposition. The Austrian Government of his manhood years—that of Count Taaffe—was conservative and clerical; Rudolph took up with the Liberals. But the evidence which Mr. Barkeley himself produces shows the Crown Prince's views to have been completely superficial and dilettante, as well as of a chameleon-like inconsistency. At one moment he is calling himself a friend of the Czechs and the Slavs in general; at another, of the Germans. He attacks the policy of the Hungarian Government under Coloman Tisza, and coquettes with the same Government. He wants to rest the Monarchy on the new, live forces of the day, and talks about Germanising Trieste. He regards war with Russia as not only inevitable, but desirable, and quarrels with Austria's alliance with Germany.

The greatest weakness of this book is that Mr. Barkeley does not seem to see the impossibility of his thesis. His own elucidations of the problems in question are quite remarkably *simplistes* and unilluminating. To read his book, no one would have any conception of the immensely complex nexus of interlocking and mutually conflicting interests and ambitions, national, political, social and strategic, which constituted the 'problem of Austria'. All we get is a Ormuzd-Ahriman dichotomy of liberalism and reaction, in which Rudolph is practically always right. The reader who knows nothing about Austria will be bewildered; the reader who does know something is irritated, again and again, by the sheer looseness of the presentation. It may, incidentally, be remarked that the serious historians who have investigated the 'conspiracy' rumour of 1889 are agreed in regarding as quite impossible the theory to which Mr. Barkeley appears to give credence.

Finally, the pursuit of his thesis leads Mr. Barkeley to be much less than fair to those persons with whom his hero disagreed: Bismarck, Taaffe, and above all, the old Emperor, who was by no means so limited as he is made out here. The fact seems to be that while Mr. Barkeley has been painstakingly conscientious in reading up the available literature on Rudolph's personal life, and in consulting unpublished sources, some of them recondite, on it, he has not thought it necessary to acquaint himself with the wider political and historical background; and he has then chosen an approach to his subject for which such an acquaintance is indispensable. It is to be hoped that he will do the spadework more thoroughly for his promised volume on Franz Ferdinand and the Emperor Charles.

C. A. MACARTNEY



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## Anybody's Guess

Causes of Crime. By Lord Pakenham.

Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 21s.

IN 1953 LORD PAKENHAM was invited by the Nuffield Foundation to carry out an enquiry into current opinion about the causes of crime. The results have been eagerly awaited by everyone interested in the subject, and especially, perhaps, by those of us who gave evidence, separated from our courteous, benign and sceptical host by a table bearing that most intimidating of all instruments—a tape-recorder. His scepticism on the subject of any conspicuous advance in our knowledge of the causes of crime was confirmed. 'We certainly collected a variety of views never previously assembled', he says. 'But every reply to our questions suffers, from our point of view, from one or two defects: either it contains no quantitative estimates, however rough, of the importance of the various factors; or, if it does so, its estimate has at present "no proved foundation"'. Scepticism is nearly always enjoyable, and there is a faint hint that Lord Pakenham found it peculiarly satisfying. When he contemplates the notion that causal laws might be established, he observes that 'there is no disguising the Christian apprehensions aroused by any dream of interpreting and ultimately controlling human conduct according to the same kind of rules as govern inanimate matter'. Cultural suasions there may be, disabilities due to defective home life are to be allowed for, but the free power to resist such suasions and to overcome such disabilities is always there; so, too, one gathers, is extra-terrestrial Assistance for those who make adequate application.

From this it will appear that in a sense, a very salutary sense, the book is a disappointment. We disagree with one another, the evidence, as Mr. Opie, in his valuable discussion of some of it, shows, is frequently contradictory, and the official statistics are grossly unreliable. The last point is expounded by Mr. T. S. Lodge, the Home Office Statistical Adviser, in a letter which should be read by every student of criminology. The confusion is made worse confounded by our concentration on what certain American criminologists call 'traditional crime'. This is due, of course, to the fact that the 'traditional criminal' is available. According to the official statistics some ninety per cent. of crimes are stealing and breaking and entering, but there is an enormous 'dark figure' of crimes not known to the police, particularly, as Mr. Lodge points out, in the form of larceny of the servant.

It may well be that most of the children who steal and break into warehouses and shops come from unsatisfactory homes; indeed, it is not easy to avoid making the concept 'unsatisfactory home' tautologous. But what about those who think it perfectly legitimate to 'knock off' this or that useful article or piece of raw material at work? They are seldom 'copped', and only one study has been made of them to my knowledge, though I know a good many culprits. It would be very difficult to find out, but it is quite on the cards that their home backgrounds are highly respectable. And what, again, of the 'white collar' criminal? What of the people who make false returns on their income-tax forms? What of the embezzlers, who 'borrow'—and pay back? What, Dr. Barbara Wootton would add, about the reckless motorist? Is it plausible to suppose that such people have had too little milk as kids, or have been unduly beaten or petted, or have unstable personalities? Investigation is well-nigh impossible, but one cannot help thinking that the causes of crime are not only multiple, but vary with social class and type of offence. Perhaps some advance could be made if we were to define the criminal risks of different social classes and different occupations, and treat 'crime' not as a homogeneous category of conduct, but rather as an umbrella word covering a variety of separable illegalities. A beginning has been made in America with Cressey's study of embezzlers (*Other People's Money*), and in this country research is being carried out in Cambridge on crimes of violence. Meanwhile we are grateful to Lord Pakenham for his efforts. He has demonstrated the bareness of our cupboards, and clamoured for research facilities to help us to do better in the future.

W. J. H. SPROTT

## 'A Shameful Lot'

Wai-Wai. By Nicholas Guppy. Murray. 28s.

MR. GUPPY IS A BOTANIST and *Wai-Wai* records his journey deep into the equatorial forests on the borders of British Guiana and Brazil to collect rare and unknown species of trees and plants and to examine into the nature of the ancient forests themselves—those vast areas of almost impenetrable jungle from which the thickly clustered heads of giant trees exclude the light of the sun, and which have never been explored before.

Mr. Guppy's scientific pursuits were richly rewarded, but his curiosity is boundless and his book is about many other things besides botany. Scattered about this twilit world are the remnants of various Indian tribes, such as the Wai-Wai who give the book its name, some of them as unknown as the fantastic flora and fauna among which they live, and to whom Mr. Guppy, the only white man in his small expeditionary team, was the first white man they had ever seen. Gaily painted and decked with gorgeous feathers, beads and other ornamentations, their confidence had to be won, and kept, before they would consent to help him as guides and porters and as providers of food and information about themselves and their lost world. Fortunately for him, and for us, no better emissary from civilisation than the young author of this fascinating book could be imagined. Patient, kind, imperturbable, and persevering, he is soon accepted as a friend by these independent Indians and is even let into secrets hitherto closely guarded, such as the recipe for poisoning arrows.

Travelling in home-made boats down uncharted and dangerous rivers, his farthest journey took him, by invitation, to the capital (a few huts and cultivations in a clearing) of the Mawayáns, perhaps the Frog Indians of legend, where he stays for some days. He is surprised and impressed by the happiness, peacefulness, dignity and good manners of these forest dwellers and ponders the question: 'If there was a profound difference between the world of the forest Indians and that of our civilisation which will soon overwhelm it, it was that while in the latter ambition is so important that it is hard to conceive of existence without it, in the former it is almost absent. And it was precisely this lack of struggle between men, I believe, that produced the happy, beautifully mannered societies of the forest depth'. Eager though they all were to possess the cheap trade goods—safety pins, beads, mirrors, knives, fish-hooks, mouth-organs, etc.—with which he paid them for their services, they were nevertheless willing to exchange these rare and precious objects with other Indians for such things as arrows, cassava-graters, red paint, which they were perfectly able to make for themselves. Such 'simple' behaviour is explained to Mr. Guppy by one of the more sophisticated Wai-Wais who had been in missionary hands: 'Wild Indians no know about trade. It is for make friends. Give even when want to keep. He give something else or maybe he no pay back now. No matter. Next year—any time. Every Indian make arrow. If I make, save you make. You make something else'.

This lack of possessiveness and jealousy extends to their personal relationships. Polygamous and promiscuous, 'the right of the adolescent to satisfy his sexual need is openly acknowledged, the activity of both sexes appears to be parallel'. Without apparent ceremony they marry; women may have several husbands, men several wives, according to the balance of sexes in the particular tribe; birth control is understood. They are kind and loving to each other and seldom quarrel; if they don't get on well together they part. 'There was nothing to make people stay together if they did not want to. Some people lived together happily all their lives, but others moved about from person to person all the time'. 'Even in their mythology, where stories of sexual intercourse between humans and animals are common', Mr. Guppy found no evidence of homosexuality.

Feeling themselves close to the beasts, they understand them in an equal, simple way and are able to tame all the wild species which have sufficient intelligence. The young, if taken from their mothers, are suckled by the women; but even the adults are easily subjugated by being painted with their captor's body paint or smeared with his sweat. 'Numerous pets roamed the village . . .



unconfined (and in the case of birds, with unclipped wings), free to go away and lead independent lives whenever they wished, yet preferring to stay among human beings'. 'They are never treated in any special way, but along with dogs and children form part of the family, move when it moves, and share its food'. If edible they themselves furnish food in time of need. Dogs the Indians dote on: 'Their dogs are, collectively, the world's most pampered—nothing is too good for them. . . . They spend most of their adult lives reclining, in the ease of Oriental potentates, on their shelves, or even in their own hammocks, above the ground out of the reach of jigger-fleas. . . . They are fed on the pick of the kill; and they are washed two or three times a day . . . to prevent them suffering from the heat'.

As might be expected of people of such sense and sensibility they are artists, delighting to adorn not only their persons but every utensil they possess with stylish abstract designs, and their religious beliefs seem as wise as all else we are told about them. 'The universe, as the Mawayáns and Wai-Wais conceive it, is neutral: merely a place in which one lives, pleasant or unpleasant as the creatures in it, of whom man is no more important than any other, make it so'. They believe that everything, animate or inanimate, 'has some sort of life or spirit in it, and that the spirits of dead things go to the sky and live with the Creator'. The Creator, however, gets no prayers; why should he? 'a wise old man, he lives in the sky, paying no attention to what happens on earth'. Man 'has to accept responsibility for his own actions and their consequences for all time—but their consequences are comparatively minor'—compared, that is, with the heavy burdens of Sin and Guilt that Christians have to bear; the worst, it seems, that can befall a Mawayán who harms others or breaks tribal laws is that he won't be liked, and may himself be harmed, in this world or the next.

The glimpse afforded us by Mr. Guppy of these gay, simple, happy people must be a fleeting one, for 'civilisation and the missionaries' are on their doorstep'. Already the diseases of civilisation, coming in with the mouth-organs and safety pins, have decimated the tribes; Mr. Guppy himself took in a troublesome infection. Of all those who form the vanguard of civilisation, the missionaries, in his opinion, are perhaps the most destructive; 'their aim is to overthrow everything that is fundamental in the heathen's beliefs and ways of life'. 'A shameful lot', says his missionary host; 'their souls are in danger, and we must save their souls for Christ'.

J. R. ACKERLEY

## Jacobite University

Georgian Oxford. By W. R. Ward. Oxford. 37s. 6d.

*Georgian Oxford* is a study of University politics in the eighteenth century, mainly from 1714 to 1780. It sets out to show that after 1714, 'both at Oxford and Westminster, Toryism approximated increasingly to "independent country" politics'; that the University was 'always overwhelmingly loyal to the dynasty and predominantly out of sympathy with the Ministers'; and that her reputation for Jacobitism was due mainly to the Whig practice of 'indiscriminately abusing their opponents both lay and clerical as Jacobites'. Any facts inconsistent with this thesis are explained away, passed over, or attenuated as far as possible. Thus, of four

successive Jacobite Chancellors, the Duke of Ormonde is said to have been so 'savagely calumniated by the Whigs as a Jacobite' that he was 'goaded into actual treason'. His brother and successor, Lord Arran, is admitted to have been 'prominent in Jacobite correspondence until the attempt of 1719', after which it is implied that he dropped out, though in fact he figures in the Stuart papers as one of the leading Jacobites till 1741. Of the third Chancellor Mr. Ward writes:

According to Horace Walpole, Westmorland had 'commanded the very body of troops which George I had been obliged to send to Oxford to teach the University the only kind of passive obedience of which they did not approve', but being deprived of his command in 1733 for opposition to Walpole's Excise Bill, he had entered upon a steady course of opposition.



'She gave us all a dazzling smile'

From 'Wai-Wai'

Not only are all these statements incorrect—Westmorland was not in command of the troops sent to Oxford in 1715, was not deprived of his command in 1733, and voted for the Excise Bill—but the words 'entered upon a steady course of opposition' are substituted for Horace Walpole's statement that Westmorland was led 'to imbibe all the nonsensical tenets of the Jacobites'. In fact Westmorland is mentioned by the Pretender in 1743 as one of his most trusted supporters in England. Similarly we are told that the fourth Chancellor, Lord Lichfield, 'boasted a long record of opposition', but not that he participated in the appeal made by the leading English Jacobites to the French Government to invade England in 1745.

It is unnecessary to multiply examples of the lengths to which Mr. Ward is driven by his efforts to fit the facts to a preconceived thesis, originally constructed to account for an entirely different situation. His fundamental proposition is nothing more than an antedating of Sir Lewis Namier's dictum that 'the group which in 1760 went by the name of

Tories, a generation later is referred to simply as "independent country gentlemen"'. But it is clearly impossible to equate Tories with independent country gentlemen so long as the core of the party, including all its leaders, constituted a Jacobite fifth column. For the purpose of Mr. Ward's thesis, therefore, it is necessary to treat Jacobitism, 'the concealed mother' of the old Tory party, as extinct a generation before it actually became so. *Georgian Oxford*, in short, is an example of the growing practice of applying Sir Lewis Namier's conclusions instead of his methods to the first half of the eighteenth century.

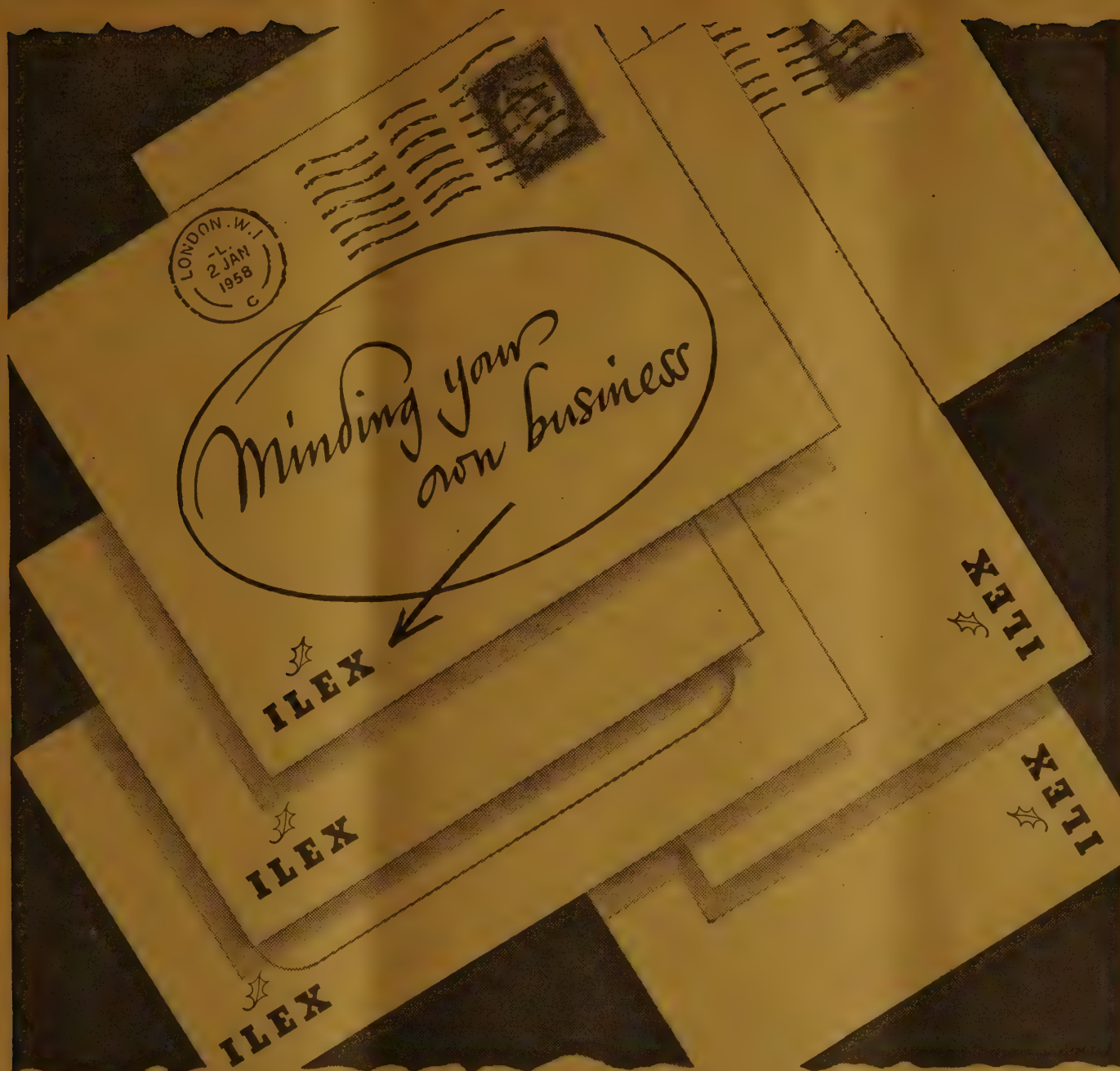
A more open question than Oxford's notorious Jacobitism is why she continued to return Jacobite M.P.s while Cambridge went over to the other side. According to a report from a Jacobite agent to the Pretender this was

owing to the number of honorary Doctors who have been made by the person in possession of the Crown, who has a power to make as many as he pleases in Cambridge, tho' not at Oxford, and all those Doctors have votes in the election of Members of Parliament.

Mr. Ward does not discuss this matter, nor does he throw any light on the contents of the Bill prepared in 1719 for securing political control of both Universities. A draft of this Bill is in existence; providing *inter alia* that the rules and statutes of both Universities were to be redrafted by persons appointed by the King; no Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor was to assume office without the King's prior consent; and the King was to be empowered to nominate all heads of Houses. In the end the Bill was dropped, but it deserves commemoration as the last serious threat to academic liberty in this country.

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## O No John!

The Idiom of the People: English Traditional Verse  
from the MSS. of Cecil Sharp

By James Reeves. Heinemann. 21s.

THOSE VERSED IN BALLADS, street-songs and other products of the Common Muse, will always have looked upon 'folk-song'—in the Cecil Sharp House sense of the word—with a partly equivocal eye. The ballad is strong, direct, coarse in texture and often also in language; its poetry may well be of a gaunt but breath-taking beauty. Of beauty the street-song can usually show little; but it has the same straightforward vigour of diction—the tune of the speaking voice is in it, and no new names are found for spades. But what neither the ballad nor the street-song can ever be said to possess is such qualities (if they be qualities) as prettiness and refinement—provided, that is, that there has been no 'literary' contamination. What then are we to make of 'folk-song'? Here all is prettiness and easy charm. Were Victorian and Edwardian rustics really so goody-goody? Had the concentrated puritanism of nineteenth-century pastors and masters really so direly elevating an effect? The folk-song singers seem to sit at the gates of their thatched and white-washed cottages, with roses rambling neatly about their feet, and their smocks laundered—yes, and their lambs too!—twice a day. A little acquaintance with the subject must convince one that all this is no more than an urban dream. The songs, as we at present have them, do not come from the rural lip to the printed page direct. For first they have been passed through a bowdlerising, re-writing and generally prettifying machine known as a *collector*. The attitude towards his text of the average turn-of-the-century collector is nicely characterised by Mr. Reeves as 'admiration marred by patronage'.

The folk product became the art product. Collectors varied in their methods, and in the degrees of their ruthlessness. The Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, of glorious name but less glorious memory, suppressed entirely where he was shocked and his originals are lost beyond recovery. Sharp was a man of altogether more scholarly and more humane fibre. He altered, but with a heavy heart: and he preserved his originals. His first object, after all, was not the transmission of accurate texts: it was to make the English world aware of the musical treasures of its popular heritage, to replace the drawing-room ballad with cleaner, less sickly stuff, and to revive the country dance. He enlisted all available authorities, notably the Board of Education; and how admirably he succeeded! The good effects of his life-work upon general musical taste, and his additions to the sum total of simple human happiness, are both incalculable. All the same, he writes,

the folk-song collector has perforce to undertake the distasteful task of modifying noble and beautiful sentiments in order that they may suit the minds and conform to the conventions of another age, where such things would not be understood in the primitive, direct and healthy sense . . .

This excellent and important book with the maddening title (surely, surely it should simply have been *Songs from the Sharp MSS.*?) gives 115 of Sharp's transcripts, faithfully reproduced and ably introduced and edited; and one wonders above all why on earth this has never been done before. This is a brilliant collection, full of vigour, integrity, and some good poetry too. There is space here only to indicate what a single song looks like when it has had its party clothes stripped off again. 'O No John' is sufficiently well known, and I need only remind the reader that it concerns a young lady whose father, 'a Spanish captain', bid her always answer 'No' while he was away, and how her would-be lover, after numerous rebuffs, cunningly asked her whether she wished to be single all her life? 'O No John!'—and wedding-bells thereafter. Sharp's note to his published version runs: 'The first two stanzas of the text are exactly as they were sung to me; the rest of the lines were coarse and needed considerable revision!' Yes indeed! In Sharp's original it is the lady's *husband*, and not her father, who is the Spanish captain. A single verbal change has altered the whole conception. And now the 'pay-off' verse goes:

Madam shall I tie your garter,  
Tie it a little above your knee?

If my hand should slip a little farther  
Would you think it amiss of me?

O No John, No John, No John No

This is no chance interpolation: it is the *only* verse that every single one of Sharp's informants could remember—in fact one dear old gentleman of seventy-eight could only remember one other.

If a man gets up on his hind legs to perform a polite ditty of honourable courtship (in which the rustic muse is quite uninterested) to a piano, rather than a frank ballad of seduction and adultery unaccompanied, that may well be a better and nicer sort of thing to do. I do not argue the point. But in that case he must *not* kid himself that what he is doing has anything much to do with 'the people'—though 'the people' seem to have disappeared nowadays and there is nothing left in their place but 'people'.

HILARY CORKE

## Errors of the West

Power and Diplomacy. By Dean Acheson.

Oxford, for Harvard University Press. 17s. 6d.

MR. ACHESON WROTE a rather gloomy book about the attitude of Congress towards foreign affairs. His latest book is also gloomy, this time an account of the policies of the United States and her allies in recent years. He has little good to say of any of them, but his most severe criticism is reserved for his own country. The Western alliance, he thinks, has been crippled by its lack of foresight, unity, and self-sacrifice. The struggle with the Soviet Union is one in which the free world may be undermined and destroyed before it realises what it is doing. Its resources are ample to provide the necessary defence, if only its members will combine together and make the necessary preparations in time. On the United States, its leader, falls the main responsibility for the failure to do so.

As to its strategy, his attitude towards the great deterrent is orthodox; he considers it to be both necessary and unusable except in the case of an overall attack by the Soviet Union. He has no difficulty in showing that a policy of disengagement would be the end of the Western alliance. What is needed is sufficient force to counter the Soviet superiority in conventional manpower and weapons. Unlike some amateur strategists he does not find this in tactical nuclear weapons except as a temporary expedient to fill a gap. He points out that if the United States decides to rely mainly on this method of defence, it will, in effect, be defending itself at the cost of the destruction of Europe. What the West needs to meet the Soviet threat, both in Europe and elsewhere, is larger conventional forces. But the United States refuses to give the necessary lead, while the economic weakness of Britain and the preoccupation of France with Algeria prevent them from playing their part. He says little about the German army, on which, perhaps, he had not much information.

On political affairs, Mr. Acheson's own field of action, he is even more critical of the West. He distributes the blame of Suez fairly amongst the United States, Britain, and France. He condemns his own country's policy towards Canada, Latin America and India for lack of understanding and generosity. His devastating analysis of the Chinese situation shows that he regards the support of the Formosan government as not worth its cost and bound to end in failure. He despairs of any solution of the Algerian problem but considers that the United States should not for that reason turn against France.

In all this reasoning there is much truth; but Mr. Acheson conveys a false impression of the world situation because he ignores the difficulties of the Soviet Union and does not subject its mistakes to the same devastating analysis. Perhaps as much harm has been done to the Western alliance by over-pessimistic appreciations as by those that are too sanguine. Nevertheless, in insisting that the countries of the free world can only save themselves if they are prepared to combine together in making the necessary preparations for defence, Mr. Acheson is restating a truism that cannot be too often repeated and is, perhaps, less understood in Europe than in the United States.

CHARLES WEBSTER



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# CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

Television Broadcasting

## DOCUMENTARY

### Antarctica and Elsewhere

THOSE HOODED human shapes of whom from time to time we used to see blurred photographs in a waste of snow and to hear garbled reports on the News, as they made their determined way across the continent of ice, turned on Sunday into people with voices and faces, and in some cases beards, modest, articulate, informative. They were grouped in the studio round a huge map of the South Pole and came forward one after the other to describe a phase of the journey or explain a particular piece of research. 'The Crossing of the Antarctic' made clear how the whole operation was conceived and carried out and gave an indication of what in terms of discovery it achieved. Sir Vivian Fuchs showed how all the various aspects of the crossing fitted together as one supreme feat of teamwork. Smiling, pointer in hand, he told the tale in the simplest of words with a nice degree of understatement; digging snow was 'a task with which we became familiar'.

And snow was a sight with which we became familiar during this most memorable hour of documentary, from the shots of aircraft landing on it and the base being established on it at South Ice, to the film taken on the main journey to the Pole with the sight of a Sno-cat that had plunged into a crevasse being hauled out of it by two others. But the carefully planned programme, produced by David Attenborough, was by no means merely one of spectacle. We saw how seismographical observations were made with a charge of T.N.T. and recorded each day; we heard what work was done in geology, glaciology, meteorology, and we had an account from Dr. Allan Rogers of the health of the party during the course of the expedition. The programme has been eagerly awaited for a long time and it did not disappoint our expectations.

Antarctica apart, it has been a busy week. Pictorial evidence on a number of matters about which there is much room for doubt has been offered abundantly for our consideration. How

did Mr. Khrushchev achieve power? What really went on in Hitler's bunker in Berlin before he died? Is the amount of radiation involved in having your foot x-rayed when trying a new pair of shoes more than a hydrogen bomb's fall-out? (Unbelievably, the answer here would appear to be yes.) Is boxing as a sport harmful or not? Is there anything at all in common between The Method as taught by Stanislavsky, as currently practised by the Moscow Arts Theatre, and as to be seen in the work of certain groups in America?

Mr. Tyrone Guthrie and some Russian film, together with a wise word from M. Michel Saint-Denis, did much to clarify this difficult point of theatrical mystique, in a specially good edition of 'Monitor' a Sunday ago. Add to all this interviews with railwaymen and busmen, and hastily produced scraps of film from Algeria, and you have some idea of how keenly we are kept abreast of the time. But as well as these questions of great urgency, there are others less momentous that are always with us, and neither have they, midst all the hurly-burly, been forgotten. One of them, which was thoroughly dived into last Thursday, dates from that journalistic red-letter day in 1933 when Mr. Alex Campbell sent a story to the *Inverness Courier* giving evidence of the existence of a monster inhabiting Loch Ness.

'The Legend of the Loch', which marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Campbell's scoop, was a splendid example of the combined O.B. op. I am one of those last-ditch sceptics who would not believe in the monster even if I happened to catch sight of it rearing its 'long, thin neck and sheep's head' (according to one description) at me out of the black waters of the loch; but the number of people interviewed on shore in Urquhart Bay who obviously had seen it was most persuasive. From them and from some actual photographs of 'Nessie', we switched to Raymond Baxter aboard ship in the loch with a team of frogmen led by Mark Terrell and some intricate echo-sounding apparatus. Down went the frogmen to a depth of forty feet, and with them a television camera and a microphone, keeping their eyes skinned for evidence of the monster. They didn't find any on this occasion, but their own floating forms made a remarkable climax to this highly efficient and beguiling broadcast.

The manner of Hitler's death is another matter about which there has been a good deal of guessing and we



Sir Vivian Fuchs, leader of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, seen with other members of the expedition in 'The Crossing of the Antarctic' on May 18

were treated in 'You Are There' to a dramatised account of how it might be presumed to have occurred. I felt that the episode was far too recently historical to stand up at all well to this kind of faking, especially coming as it did in a week which has included such notable studies in the authentic as Mr. Ed Murrow and his team thoroughly investigating fall-out for well over an hour, and, on the somewhat smaller scale that characterises our own production in the documentary field, the first of a new series of 'Portraits of Power' in which we penetrated a little of the thick fog surrounding Mr. Khrushchev. In this game the people themselves are always better actors than actors: Eva Braun with a Cockney accent just won't do. It only makes us feel how much we are not there.

A belligerent tone is on the whole pretty carefully kept out of television discussions, but in the debate about boxing in 'You Are the Jury' (how they love telling us where and what we are!) it came through loud and clear. Everyone was so concerned to make a knockout that it all left the invisible jury of viewers cold.

ANTHONY CURTIS

## DRAMA

### Naval and Civilian

'SUNDAY-NIGHT THEATRE' provided us with 'The Trial of Admiral Byng', by Maurice Edelman. This came from Birmingham, with Peter Dews as producer and Sir Donald Wolfit to give both poignance and substance to the Admiral. Byng was shot in 1756, after a court martial, for failing to relieve and for sailing away from the British garrison in Minorca. It was Byng's contention that his ships were unseaworthy, under-manned, and too few for any successful action: a dash at the well-defended island would have only ended in a dangerous disaster at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, for which all our strength had to be preserved.

We were shown Byng as the scapegoat for political mismanagement and as a victim of the



'The Death of Adolf Hitler' in the series 'You Are There' on May 14: the marriage ceremony of Hitler and Eva Braun, with Sydney Arnold as the Registrar (back to camera) and (left to right) Ian Wilson as Dr. Goebbels, Barbara Maddock as his wife, Reginald Beckwith as Hitler, Peter Bennett as Bormann, Patricia Raine as Eva Braun, and Tom Bowman as Guensche



Duke of Newcastle's incompetence and corruption at the head of the Government. The money due to the Fleet for its proper maintenance had been pilfered. It seems the more surprising that the Admirals who were Byng's judges did not stand by one of their own Service and rank in order to defeat the nefarious politician, a mere land-animal. As shown, they were fair and reasonable men with only one, Broderick, who seemed to start with a dislike of Byng. The case against Byng's conduct rested mainly on the evidence of Minorca's Governor, who was presented in his dotage, and a captain who was such an obvious snake that his venom should have been suspect as soon as he started to malign his Admiral. Why then this terrible judgement?

It might have been emphasised that Britain, unprepared as ever, was engaged in a desperate war and that some general alarm was abroad to make an emotional decision likely. But if the verdict was hard to understand, the trial was extremely well presented. Sir Donald may at first have seemed to be a trifle stilted in his self-defence, but it was soon explained that this was the mask for his own misgivings. He had to put on the show of a good sea-dog. In a later scene Byng, with a most moving humility, explains to his loyal secretary his own doubts of his self-sufficiency and of his decision to abandon the garrison clinging to Minorca. The character thus became completely integrated and the performance justified in every detail.

There was necessarily a large cast in which no failure in execution of their duty was anywhere apparent. Malcolm Keen and Edward Chapman were admirable admirals and Elwyn Brook-Jones made Newcastle properly odious in his lack of scruple and abundance of intrigue.

It will always be disputed whether televising an excerpt from a play now running in a theatre is an advantage to that piece. There have been notable examples of box-office business, which was hanging fire, being damped by this procedure as well as set ablaze. Sometimes I feel, after the excerpt, that I now know all about that and do not require the full treatment. But I surmise that the section from 'Any Other Business' at the Westminster Theatre (May 15) will make wise playgoers eager to see the whole of the story.

For once we have authors, George Ross and

Campbell Singer, who are dealing with an urgent problem of contemporary industry and finance. No stage 'business' here, but the down-to-boardroom dilemma of a highly individual (and prosperous) Yorkshire woollen firm threatened with a take-over bid by a huge combine which does not care a jot for the firm's particular quality but cares very much for its quantity of reserves in cash and raw material. The combine can bribe the shareholders with a nice offer—must the directors give in?

What we saw of the battle was good fighting with no less good acting of financial and managerial types by Raymond Huntley, Ralph Michael, and others. As to the play's end I was left on 'tenter-hooks'. What, by the way, are tenter-hooks? They are the hooks 'by which the edges of the cloth are held on the stretching frame after milling'. The familiar phrase was most appropriate here. I was



'The Trial of Admiral Byng' on May 18, with Geoffrey Taylor (left) as Captain Faulkner, Malcolm Keen (seated, centre) as Admiral Smith, the President, Edward Chapman as Admiral Broderick, and Sir Donald Wolfitt (right) as Admiral Byng



Scene from 'Any Other Business' on May 15, with (left to right) Trevor Reid as Harry Dodds, John Barron as Geoffrey Harrison, Ralph Michael as Julian Armstrong, Raymond Huntley as Sir Norman Tullis, Richard Vernon as Charles Playden, John Boxer as Malcolm Turnbull, and Oliver Johnston as Jonathan Travis

properly 'tentered' and shall be surprised if people don't 'get weaving'—to the Westminster Theatre.

On Wednesdays, if summer be chilly, one can bask in the smiles of Perry Como, who unfailingly shows how much can be done by a carefully rehearsed display of seemingly unrehearsed charm. Mr. Como himself has no conspicuous talents; he does not prod himself to toil or spin. He has perfectly mastered the art of being a suave host; tension is unthinkable in such relaxed and relaxing company. The melodies offered by him and his occasional assistants are of the consoling kind. Since strawberries and cream are still some weeks away, we are gently persuaded by the Como touch that life is none the less a bowl of berries with cream standing ready beside it. There are, of course, some people allergic to strawberries and others made bilious by cream. They have been warned.

On Saturday there began a new series of six half-hour episodes called 'Duty Bound', written by Donald Giltinan and produced by Adrian

Brown. Dermot Walsh, with a watching job for Customs and Excise, snoops to conquer and then deals gently with a couple of juvenile cigarette-runners. This first 'adventure' was a mild smoke; a stronger blend might be more popular with the numerous case-hardened addicts of crime and detection. But I can do with absence of the tough stuff.

IVOR BROWN

Sound Broadcasting

DRAMA

Imperium Vincit Caractacus?

ON MONDAY AFTERNOON, June 2, there is to be a Home Service repeat of Giles Cooper's 'Dangerous Word', first broadcast last week. I hope anyone who did not hear the play and is able to listen then will do so. It is no news that Mr. Cooper is one of our up and coming writers of radio drama. 'Dangerous Word' is surely his best yet, and after the hard things I had to say last week about Peter Watts' production of a Continental comedy I am glad to congratulate him on his interpretation of this English script.

'Lord of the Flies' last year was a remarkable radio achievement, but after all it was adapted by Mr. Cooper from Mr. Golding's novel and there were limitations of dialogue and characterisation inseparable from a cast of schoolboy castaways. 'Without the Grail', earlier this year, showed Mr. Cooper creating his own characters in an Arthurian allegory set in Assam. Much as I liked it I had to point out that to some extent the parable made puppets of the people.

In 'Dangerous Word' Mr. Cooper is still on the same tack. Once again the remote tropical setting, the implied indictment of our own social shortcomings. This theme, exerting a continuous and mounting pressure behind the apparent naturalism of dialogue, gives the piece a momentum, a meaning, a life which, as far as I am concerned, makes all the vital difference between story-telling and drama. This time the theme is much more fully incarnated in the characters, though never lost in them. They develop as real people in a way that makes them more fully human than the characters of 'Without the Grail' and thereby make the theme itself less of a demonstration and more of an exploration and an unfolding experience.



The first of six adventures, 'Duty Bound', on May 17, with (left to right) Brian Peck as Joe Davis, Timothy Harley as Phonsy Transom, Dorothy White as Liz Transom, Dermot Walsh as Dexter, and John Warner as Cook



The dangerous word of the title is 'justice'. The young Welshman who arrives somewhere east of Suez as district magistrate, after finding that law in London is 'a jungle of ambition' and failing to get elected to parliament as a Labour member, is called Caradoc. Quite rightly, Mr. Cooper does not annotate that name for us as he rather did with the Arthurian allusion in 'Without the Grail', but it would be a pity if the point was missed. Caradoc (otherwise Caractacus) led the British resistance to the Roman conquerors which ended when he risked a pitched battle and was routed. The queen with whom he sought sanctuary turned him over to the Empire and he was led in triumph through the streets of Rome.

That is not precisely what happens to Mr. Cooper's Caradoc, but there is much in the story of his attempt to assert the real strength of his nation against the tyranny of Empire that should remind us of it. At first it seems that the man of principle is going to clean up the colony where the whites, not bad in themselves, will nevertheless fall back on near-Nazi nastiness when necessary to keep the natives under. Then it comes out that he had a personal motive, not acknowledged even to himself, in seeing that the law dealt in the same way with a white as with coloured offenders, an action which has landed in gaol a woman with whom he is promptly accused of having an affair. What Caradoc has to face at the end, when his friend the Chief of Police has been shot dead as a result of the ensuing complications (Cooper always has a casualty at the climax), is that he is only human like the others, with comparable weaknesses and failings. No man is good enough to judge another, but in the law itself there is a standard that fallible men can serve. The uses-of-this-world imperialism has, in one way, conquered Caradoc's idealism. In another way he has stood for freedom against imperial oppression and vindicated the *lex Romana* which is the one good thing the conquerors brought with them.

Mr. Cooper has been scrupulously fair to all his characters and justice was done to them by Basil Jones (Caradoc), John Scott (the policeman), Trevor Martin, very good as the heavy-drinking, unscrupulous but not really vicious member of the master-race, and June Tobin as the woman who finds herself in a prison cell, a characterisation central to and precisely right for the play as a whole.

Marcel Aymé concocts 'some preposterous hypothesis whose consequences he works out with impeccable workaday logic to their impossible but quite convincing conclusions'. In 'A Flight of Fancy' (Third) the hypothesis is not so much paradoxical as pointless. M. Aymé seems unaware that 750 people transformed into birds is not any funnier than the first metamorphosis, there is a dramatic law of diminishing returns. Miles Malleon's skill in timing just kept a flutter of life in a farce as dead as a stuffed pheasant. On a London stage it might get the bird it deserves.

ROY WALKER

## THE SPOKEN WORD

### Auden on Byron

ONE OF THE THINGS for which I am always most grateful to broadcasting is its power to make us gate-crashers, to throw open the closed shop. Whether it be the speeches at the Royal Academy dinner, or a university lecture, the B.B.C. can at a stroke increase a thousandfold the number of those for whom the item was originally intended. In some ways this service may be of greater value in enlarging our common experience and judgement than all except a few scripts 'specially written for radio'. The latter starts by envisaging the vague millions (who may, in the event, switch off):

it is not intended in the first place for any specific body of people who can be guaranteed to turn up, but for an unspecified and heterogeneous 'everybody'. The writer of such a script may therefore be in some doubt as to the level on which his remarks ought to be offered. How much knowledge and interest can he assume? How many gimmicks will he feel obliged to call into play?

In contrast, the man who is addressing, immediately and in the first place, actual people whose standards and interest he will either know or be able to deduce, is psychologically more likely to deliver the best of which his mind is capable. In making such work available to a wider public, the B.B.C. is offering its services not as instigator but as mediator. Such a role may sound less exciting, less creative, but in fact it requires enterprise, awareness of what is going on in the outside world, and a sense of which items are likely to prove important. Of course, a programme instigated for radio may, if it does succeed, succeed immensely, and clearly no self-respecting broadcasting system must stop trying to achieve such successes. But even the success of, for instance, Professor Kennan's broadcasts, was due partly to the fact that over the years the Reith Lectures have built up a regular audience: they are an occasion to be risen to.

These reflections were suggested by the lecture on Byron's 'Don Juan' given in Oxford on May 12 by Professor W. H. Auden, recorded on the spot by the B.B.C. and offered to us all in the Third Programme two days later. Here enterprise reaped its full reward. It was one of the most authoritative lectures on a literary topic I have ever heard.

Mr. Auden started off in his best philosophical vein, shooting out like so many giant peas from a peashooter a series of propositions about comedy in general. He then compared the character of Byron's Don Juan with his mythical prototype: the defiant professional seducer, who was promiscuous not out of weakness but as an act of will, becomes in Byron's poem a romantic and selective lover, a daydream of what his author would like to have been. Byron himself is the real hero of his poem.

But the most valuable part of Mr. Auden's lecture was still to come: his long analysis of the technical aspects of the poem. He pointed out that it was Byron's discovery of *ottava rima* which turned him into a great poet. Much of his early work was written in metres which were either quite unsuitable to his genius, like the slow, timeless Spenserian stanza, or else, like the couplet, too much a maid-of-all-work. In *ottava rima* he found his authentic voice. He saw that precisely those elements in the metre—the two sets of triple rhyme—which made it unsuitable for 'serious' verse, made it the perfect vehicle for comic verse. Byron exploited to the full the incongruities of rhyme, making us laugh by bringing together words which have nothing, except the fact that they rhyme, in common. The stanza thus became a stimulus to comic invention, and gave him frequent opportunities for those conversational digressions which are so characteristic and successful a part of 'Don Juan'.

The comic poet must, said Mr. Auden, treat words as if they were things: he must 'put them through the hoop'. Byron's lack of reverence for words, which made him a second-rate serious poet, made him a great comic one; and in 'Don Juan', if you read it, as it should be read, quickly, like a novel, you get a real feeling of the movement of life itself. Mr. Auden's thesis thus affirmed, with a wealth of lively and wide-ranging detail, Lockhart's opinion of 'Don Juan', of which he observed to the author 'it is the only sincere thing you have ever written'.

The work of the French 'new realists' (with

the exception of Beckett, who is a special case) is not well known over here, so one was grateful to Olivier Todd for putting some of their novels on the map in an admirably balanced and finally devastating analysis, which is printed elsewhere in this issue. Anyone who wants a painless introduction to one of the writers he discussed should get hold of issue No. 3 of the American *Evergreen Review*, which contains samples, translated into English, of the writing of Alain Robbe-Grillet. Issue No. 2 of the same magazine includes the whole of Allen Ginsberg's poem 'Howl', part of which was recently broadcast in the Third Programme. Copies of both these issues are currently obtainable in London.

K. W. GRANSDEN

## MUSIC

### Covent Garden's Centenary

LAST THURSDAY the Royal Opera House celebrated the centenary of the present theatre built by Edward Barry to replace the building destroyed by fire in 1856. The occasion was marked by a new production of Verdi's most neglected masterpiece, 'Don Carlos', of which the first performance had been given a week earlier while the second was broadcast in the Third Programme earlier in the week. Luchino Visconti's production and Carlo Giulini's musical direction of 'Don Carlos' combined to secure, with a first-rate cast of singers, a performance such as can rarely have been equalled in the hundred years of the theatre's existence.

The first act, which Verdi discarded when he reduced the inordinate length of the opera for its production in Milan, was rightly restored. It is absolutely necessary, both from the dramatic and the musical points of view. To compensate for this, a few cuts were made, but only one of any importance—the finale of the fourth act, where, after the murder of Posa, the people of Madrid rise in revolt, demanding the liberation of the imprisoned Don Carlos, and an ugly situation for the throne is saved by the intervention of the Grand Inquisitor. Although musically this finale is not on the highest level achieved elsewhere in the opera, it is of considerable dramatic importance and its omission is an unfortunate concession to the clock. Otherwise the cuts have discreetly removed what are generally held to be the weaker pages in the score, such as the opening of the *marziale* section in the Carlos-Elisabeth duet in the last act.

The remarkable thing about Giulini's direction is that almost always it makes the music sound beautiful and effective even where one had previously thought it weak. The tenor-baritone vow of friendship is a case in point, where by a judicious tempo and, let me add, perfectly graded phrasing and balance by Jon Vickers and Tito Gobbi, a 'weak' passage was made to sound extremely beautiful and moving. I cannot say, however, that Giulini contrived to remedy the trite effect of the accompaniment to this melody when it reappears in orchestral form.

The other obviously weak patch is the 'grand' finale of Act III, the scene of the *auto-da-fé*. On paper it looks frankly dreadful. One cannot decide which is worse—the pounding theme in triplets up and down the scale of the main chorus, or the rather dreary tune sung by the Flemish deputies. In the broadcast this impression of banality in the material was not wholly corrected. But in the theatre, how different it all sounded as an accompaniment to the splendid and dreadful spectacle devised by Visconti, who is also his own scene- and dress-designer—even though as a setting this was the least successful in the production. The moral is that one must never judge Verdi's music outside the theatre. He did not compose for broadcasting, and when the broad splashes of colour and simple harmonies (as of a scenic artist) were



all that was needed, he did not think it necessary to go in for subtle effects of detail.

But what subtle effects he did go in for when the drama required it!—in the scene between Carlos and the Queen in Act II, in Posa's interview with the King, and in the whole of Act IV from Philip's soliloquy and audience with the Inquisitor to Eboli's dismissal and Posa's death. All this is high drama presented through music which is never conventional or trite, but reflects every nuance of the speakers' thought. All was quite marvellously done by an assemblage of the finest sextet of principal singers that could be assembled today, with Gobbi's Posa and Boris Christoff's Philip quite outstanding in quality.

Vickers' Don Carlos ran them close with his ringing tenor and impulsive, nervous acting. The two ladies, Brouwenstijn and Barbieri, if not quite on the same level, gave performances that would have shone in any other company.

There is one point about the production, which might be reconsidered. Philip II is played as a man of sixty. Actually, when the historical Philip married Elisabeth de Valois, he was only thirty-three, having been married for the first time to a Portuguese cousin (Carlos' mother) seventeen years earlier. Although Schiller's drama is fictional, so far as the love-affair of Carlos and Elisabeth is concerned, it would surely make the situation more convincing if

Philip were played as a young man, a possible rival to his own son, and not as a crabbed old man. It is true that Philip speaks of Elisabeth's revulsion at the sight of his grey hairs, but to a girl of sixteen (as she was) he must have seemed quite an old man and anyone who had endured what he had, including marriage to Mary Tudor, might well have acquired a white hair or two.

The Covent Garden centenary was also the occasion of an admirably planned reminiscential programme in the Home Service, in which we heard once more many famous voices and some amusing 'cracks', the best of these coming from a member of the orchestra.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

## Masque, Opera, and Comédie Lyrique

WILFRID MELLERS on Rameau's 'Platée'

'Platée' will be broadcast at 7.35 p.m. on Sunday, May 25 (Third)

CLASSICAL opera—which in France reached its consummation in the work of Rameau—evolved out of the masque; and the masque was a creation of Renaissance humanism. The assertive ego inevitably threatened religious and social orthodoxy; but it did not necessarily mean submission to chaos. Man might achieve a man-made order, redeemed not by God but by human love.

For the masque was essentially contemporary, half-way between ritual and art. It became literally the apotheosis of humanism: Man took the place of God. The point of the masque was the revelation of the masquers' identity at the end. Far from being legendary creatures from classical mythology or divine abstractions, they turn out to be the king and nobility, who are the temporal state. 'Artificial' though it may seem, the masque was based on the assumption that its apparent myth turns out to be fact. The gods are ourselves, or at least are the king and nobles, our representatives.

This vision of Concord was, however, blurred by two related paradoxes. First, while the king and nobility may look like God and his angels in this transfigured Golden Age, they differ from divine beings because they grow old and die. Secondly, the contrariness and perversity of the human heart are always liable to upset the orderly apple-cart; or—to modify the metaphor—ever since the Fall there have been crab-apples in the Garden of Eden. The masque recognised, in principle, the existence of unruly appetites and grotesque affronts to human dignity, as had the Church in the medieval Feast of Fools; but these perversities, banished to the anti-masque, were treated in a fundamentally comic spirit, since in a society as serenely gracious as ours the issue between good and evil—between masque and anti-masque—can never be in doubt.

As soon as there was doubt, masque matured into verse tragedy and into opera. The tragic operas of Monteverdi and the heroic operas of Lully are state ritual which has become art. The pieces began with complimentary addresses to the nobility, who often took part as dancers (it is worth noting that the court ceremonial of pavane and galliard was transformed into the majestic duple-rhythmed and quicker triple-rhythmed sections of the French overture). Even the anti-masque survived in the 'low' intermezzi which were sometimes played between the acts of heroic operas. But these intermezzi were a mere distraction from mental and emotional effort; the anti-masque was obsolete, without artistic justification, because the opposition is now inherent in the heroic theme itself. The vision of order is modified by inner conflict—by the realities of

man's avarice, lust, jealousy, and bad temper.

All Lully's serious operas depend on the fact that civilisation is impossible without conformity: while at the same time a basic human instinct is the unwillingness to conform. Personal passions will inevitably conflict with duty to the state or to an ideal; and—tragic paradox—both may be right. Lully's generation could see no way to resolve this dilemma, except by metamorphosis to a new state of being after the human situation has worked itself out in elegiac lament. By Gluck's time—though he inherited Lully's conventions—the temper has changed. Now conflict and resolution within the personality have become more important than the relationship of that personality to an external order. Gluck is prepared to sacrifice something of the melodic strength and textural richness of baroque opera to concentrate on the kind of inner drama that went to create the sonata style of Haydn; and his 'reform' of the opera was an attempt to discover the themes that were valid in his more democratic world. Whereas Lully's heroic operas end elegiacally, Gluck's end optimistically, in the spirit of Enlightenment. This is the beginning of the process that is fulfilled in Beethoven's symphonies: a new world is born of human strife; and the protagonists are no longer necessarily princes, the minions of God on earth.

Rameau stands half-way between Lully and Gluck. The librettos with which he had to contend have not the poetic merit of those Quinault wrote for Lully or Calzabigi for Gluck. They hover between elegy and optimism; and the equivocation does not make for the 'moral whole'. On the other hand, Rameau owes his superb richness to the fact that he is the last composer in the baroque tradition, as well as to his genius; and his operas reveal, intermittently, a wider range of experience than either Lully or Gluck. That experience is essentially tragic, reaching its apex in the great cycle of heroic operas he composed in his middle years. Nonetheless he also experimented—particularly in later life—with styles and conventions prompted by a changing world; among these experiments 'Platée' is of peculiar fascination. It was variously described as a *ballet bouffon*, a *comédie ballet*, and a *comédie lyrique*: and is a bastard form because, while accepting the conventions of the heroic age, it deliberately deflates the sublime. Its heroine is a marsh-nymph of fantastic ugliness—a Lord-Lady of Misrule or leader of the anti-masque. But, loving a king, she behaves as though she were a hero of high tragedy. To revenge this effrontery against society, no mere king but a man-god, Jupiter, pretends to love and marry her: after which everyone

enjoys her mental and physical discomfiture.

That Rameau could so savagely mock the sublime suggests that the heroic was becoming outmoded. But this progressive element, if such it be, is entirely negative, for Rameau makes no attempt to understand, to sympathise with, non-heroic people. In his tragic operas he shows us that even kings and queens have a Platée within their human nature: suggests, indeed, that being fully human involves recognising her existence and learning to control her. But in the *comédie ballet* that bears her name he says in effect: there she is, as large as life, perhaps a bit larger; our exquisitely civilised lives, however, depend on laughing her to scorn, banishing her from the *fête champêtre*. In so doing we implicitly admit that our pastoral world will not square with the facts of human nature; it is a dream, not—as in the tragic operas—a vision of order painfully achieved.

Much of the music of 'Platée' is satirical. The deliberately dull chaconne parodies heroic pomposity; the busy repeated notes, jaunty leaps, and animal and bird noises in the overture discredit the expressive line and rich harmony of baroque music and rely on rhythm and sensational instrumental effects, in the new, middle-class symphonic manner. Platée's part contains direct parody of baroque coloratura. Subtler effects are obtained by contrasting the pathos or grandeur of the words she sings with her farouche appearance and gauche gestures, expressed in angular leaps, sudden breaks in rhythm, unexpected dissonances. She is presented in external, physical terms: a brilliantly delineated portrait, not a character study.

Significantly the most beautiful music in the opera appears in the pastoral divertissements, especially the Prologue and the Folly music in Act II; and these are set in the old mythological world, viewed humorously perhaps, but not satirically. In the luscious suspended ninths and sevenths of the chorus to Hymen (the masque's antique symbol of Concord); in the seductively melancholy rigaudons; in Folly's sensuously virtuosic ariettes Rameau's melodic *allure*, chromatic harmony, and ripely coloured orchestral texture imbue the dream of a Golden Age with acute nostalgia. To pass from these moments of voluptuous elegance to Platée's ungainly crudities gives a stab of anguish to the nervous system. It must have been still more shocking when, in 1745, this tale of an ugly duckling who goes through a fake marriage with a man-god was first performed at the wedding of the Dauphin to Maria Theresa of Spain. The young lady was an aristocrat, maybe: but notoriously unglamorous.





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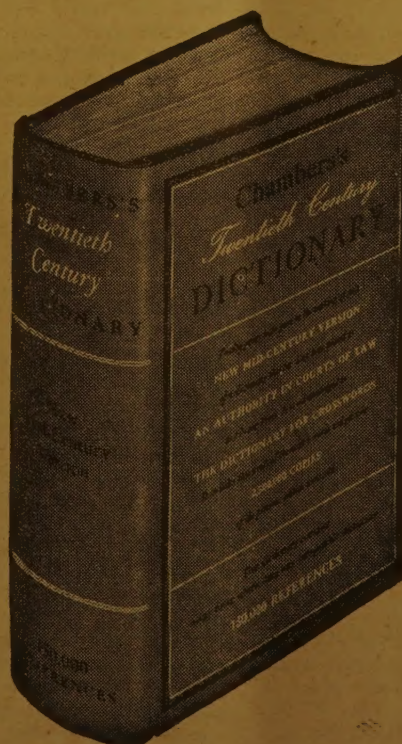
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# Broadcast Suggestions for the Housewife

## GAYER GREEN SALADS

THERE ARE MANY interesting and inexpensive garden 'bits and pieces' we can start using now to put a little colour and interest into our salad bowls. Naturally, people with gardens score—but even those of us who live in town flats and bed-sitting rooms can have some salads with a difference.

Beside endives, with their attractive curly leaves, and chicory, I like to add young beetroot tops when they are fresh and small. Then there are dandelion leaves—the small slender ones—and, later on in the summer, blanched ones which garden owners should cover with flower pots until they turn pale and grow spindly. Chives are a 'must' (we can all grow those in a window-box)—cut up finely with a little pair of scissors—and watercress and young, tender spinach leaves are delicious. I also use a few early peas, when the pods are thin and narrow, and slice them into the green salad mixture with a few nasturtium leaves. Now, the bowl needs a touch of colour. Throw in a few marigold petals, the blue flower of borage, and the dark little spikes of rosemary.

There should always be plenty of fresh herbs—thyme, lemon thyme, chervil, and dill. Tarragon must be used sparingly for it is very powerful, but it is among the finest herbs of all. Basil is another key herb, with savory and oregano, plus angelica, or bay, or sage. When using garlic, instead of rubbing a clove round the salad bowl I suggest you rub a cut clove all over a crust of bread, and then cut the crust into a number of narrow little strips. Toss these

into your finished mixture, and at the moment of serving—never before—toss the whole in a French dressing.

PHYLLIS CRADOCK

## THREE SIMPLE MENUS

1. Swiss sausages on savoury rice, and watercress salad, followed by chocolate blancmange on bananas. For the Swiss sausage dish, choose big beef sausages. Make a slit in them lengthwise, insert a wedge of cooking cheese, and fry thoroughly on both sides. For the savoury rice fry an onion in fat, add salt and pepper, and dry rice. Stir until each grain is coated with fat, then pour on some stock, and cook as usual until it is soft. Arrange the sausages on this rice. Serve watercress salad in a good dressing—for instance, a vinegar-and-cream dressing.

2. Stuffed shoulder of lamb, leeks and baked potatoes, followed by apple dumplings. Get your butcher to bone a shoulder of lamb for you. Stuff it with a mixture of stoned prunes, grated apples, and breadcrumbs. Roast it together with the potatoes and leeks in a medium oven. Just before serving, sprinkle grated cheese on the leeks, and reheat.

3. Cod mayonnaise with potatoes and cucumber salad, followed by strawberry mousse. Cod is best, but any cooked white fish, flaked, will do for the mayonnaise dish. The potatoes are best new, boiled in their skins, and then peeled and tossed in the mayonnaise; but old ones can equally well be used, cut into thick slices.

For a good creamy strawberry mousse whip a

block of ice cream into a strawberry jelly, when it is just on the point of setting.

RUTH ELLIOTT

## Notes on Contributors

STEPHEN PARKINSON (page 836): associate editor of *The Director*

DAVID BLELLOCH (page 838): an official of the International Labour Organisation from 1921-1950; since then, has served on various Technical Assistance Missions to Latin-American countries for the United Nations

E. MAURICE BACKETT (page 838): Professor of Social Medicine, Aberdeen University

DAVID JONES, C.B.E. (page 843): painter and author of *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata* (Russell Loines Memorial Award for Poetry, National Institute of Arts and Letters, New York 1954)

LENNOX ROBINSON, D.Litt. (page 845): Director, Abbey Theatre, Dublin, 1933; author of novels, stories, biographies, and plays including *The Whiteheaded Boy*, etc.

SEWELL STOKES (page 851): author of *Come to Prison*, *A Clown in Clover*, etc.

E. A. THOMPSON (page 863): Professor of Classics, Nottingham University, since 1948; author of *A Roman Reformer and Inventor*, *A History of Attila and the Huns*, etc.

PHILIP HENDERSON (page 867): author of *The Life of Laurence Oliphant—Traveller, Richard Coeur de Lion*, etc.

J. R. ACKERLEY (page 869): literary editor of *THE LISTENER*; author of 'Prisoners of War', *Hindoo Holiday*, and *My Dog Tulip*

## Crossword No. 1,460.

## Red Tape. By Meringue

Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened): book tokens, value 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

Closing date: first post on Thursday, May 29. Entries should be on the printed diagram and envelopes containing them should be addressed to the Editor of *THE LISTENER*, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked 'Crossword' in the left-hand top corner. In all matters connected with the crosswords the Editor's decision is final

The ten unclued across lights are names of colours. The ten unclued down lights, which may be proper nouns, are words associated with the colours.

## CLUES—ACROSS

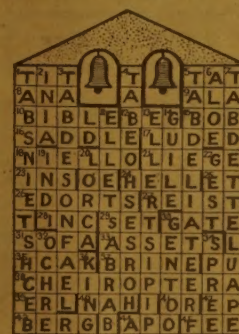
11. Behind which the undergraduate studies (3)
12. This by itself is slow progress (4)
14. Over fifty know that this means to compare (5)
16. Straightens ones clothes (7)
18. Feminine mistakes (4)
20. Stick to what we see between TV shows (6)
21. The river which flows gently (4)
22. Wool from the lion's back (4)
- 24R. Argued once upon a time (4)
- 26R. Excellent restraint is just this craze for reading things backwards (5)
30. Go and see where there's half a dozen resting (5)
- 31 & 41. Prejudice on the green (4)
32. That's dandy, because — influential at Oxford (6)
33. Knock down deadly hill (4)
34. This down is hair (3)
35. Spanish nobleman (3)
36. The more there is to it, the harder it is to prove (7)
37. Look around the end of the alphabet for the driver (5)
38. Identical cards (4)
39. Four before 25D. (3)
- 42R. Spenserian hide in the ale-house (4)
43. Drink knocked back by the Gorgons (4)
45. Title sounds of interest to the poet when reversed (5)
47. Brazilian soap tree found in revolting isolation (5)
49. Valley from which they take you in taxis (5)
50. Waterway in Somerset and Westfalen (5)
51. Initially a provider of wartime entertainment (4)
52. Daughter of Eris who led men into rash action (4)

## DOWN

1. This growth sounds in a hurry. Look on ahead! (4)
2. An ear of corn in Scotland (5)
3. A long lock (5)
4. Poetically level in the entrechat (3)
5. Care for the ball-bearings, else they'll run all over the place (4)
6. Shoe cover without name (3)
7. Money proves a frustration for wrapping up (7)
- 8R. & 41A. Girls coins (5)
9. Archaic if in the old English noble (5)
10. Flirt with i.e. do what a driver can't do (4)
13. A hundred at stake, and the whole thing can be terminated (8)

15. A vessel in a vessel presents a black outlook (7)
17. Unhappy king in the lotus bush (4)
19. It's something to get fanciful about is being a catholic (10)
23. 300 yards of linen, with beer upset all over it (3)
25. There's a letter waiting for you in the top side of the rack (3)
27. Almost a farthing, but somewhat larger by the side of a lion (3)
28. Amos loses his way in a vehicle; things get digested here (8)
29. Extra, passing into the next round (3)
35. Resident fellow, this film star (4)
36. Art is a necessary feature of wood-inlay (6)
40. Ventilates in affairs of the heart (4)
- 42R. Hitting a nail on the slant produces a dye (4)
44. The joy of unaccompanied singing (4)
46. Predominantly masculine bill of fare (4)
- 48R. Three and me make a fragrant plant (3)

## Solution of No. 1,458



## NOTES

The unclued down lights are bats suspended upside down in the belfry, hence the title 'Bats in the Belfry'.

Across: 9-25R. 'Latently', 'bordered by a leafy expansion'—Chambers. 16. Sad-dl-e. Marquis de Sade. Deputy Lieutenant. 42R.-25R. Pete-r May. 45. Liege=vassal or liege lord.

Down: 6. 170 varieties—Chambers. 19-8A. Evansville in Indiana ('an aid in'). 34. S(u)pre(m)e.

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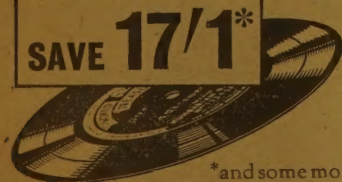
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